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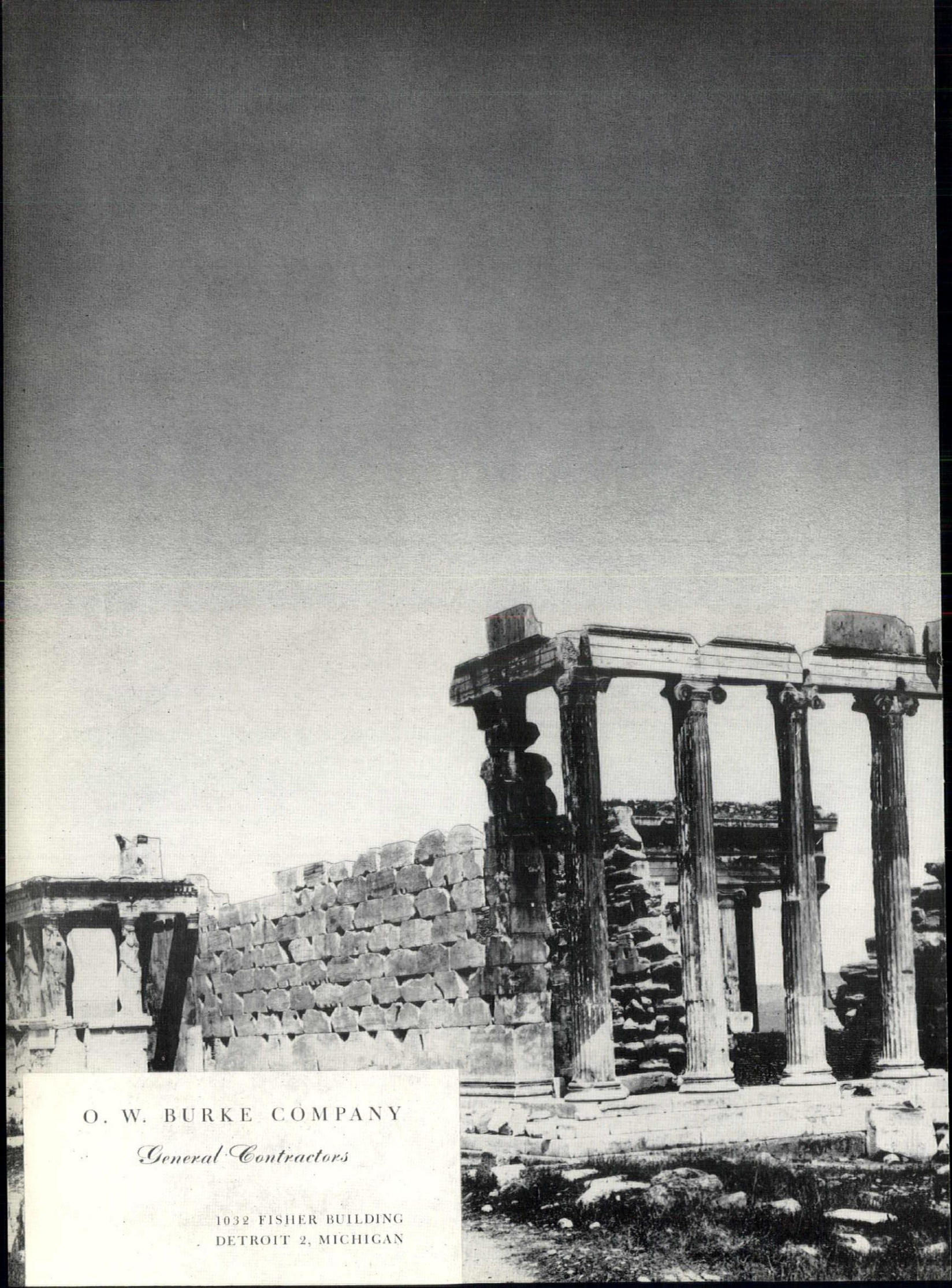

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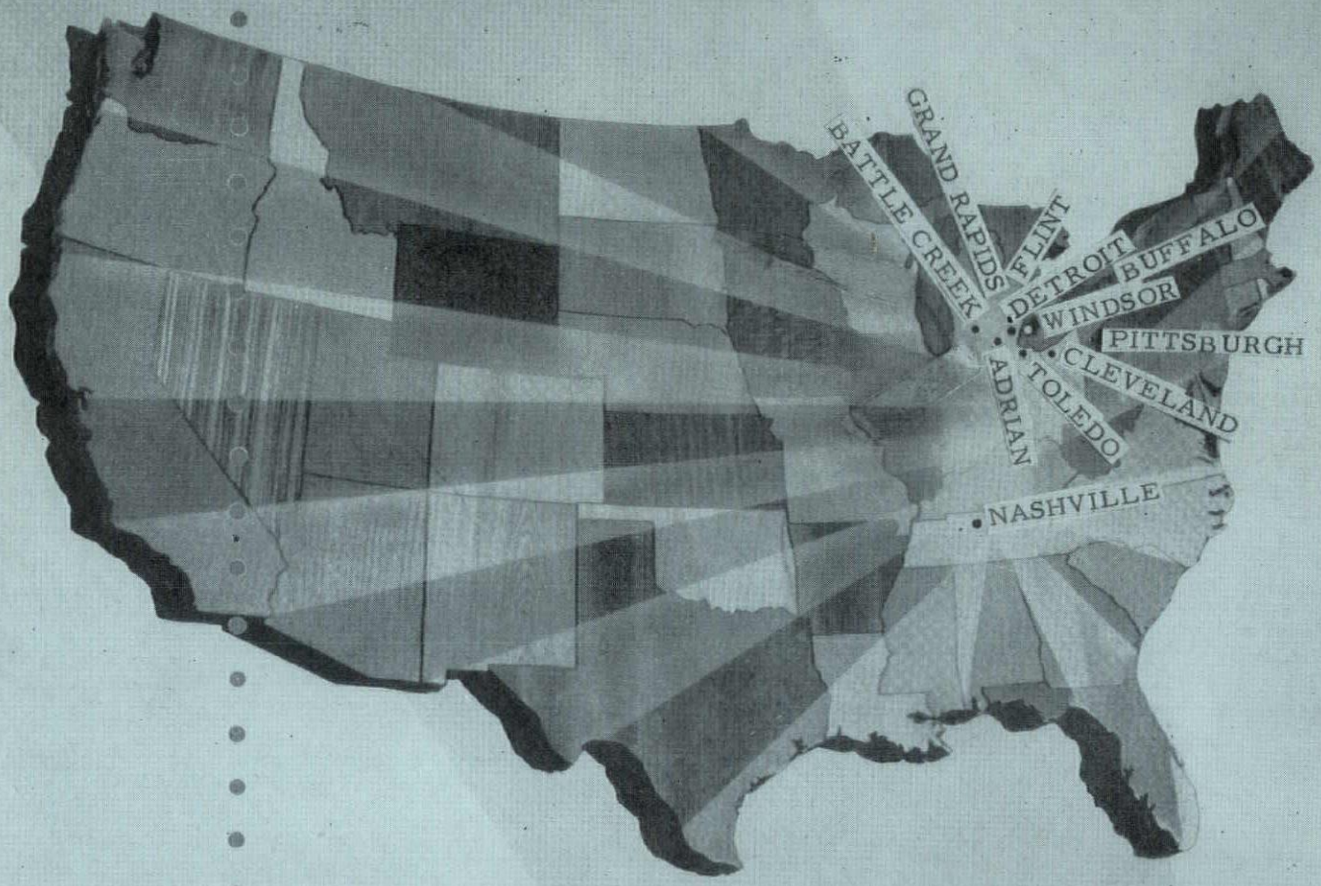

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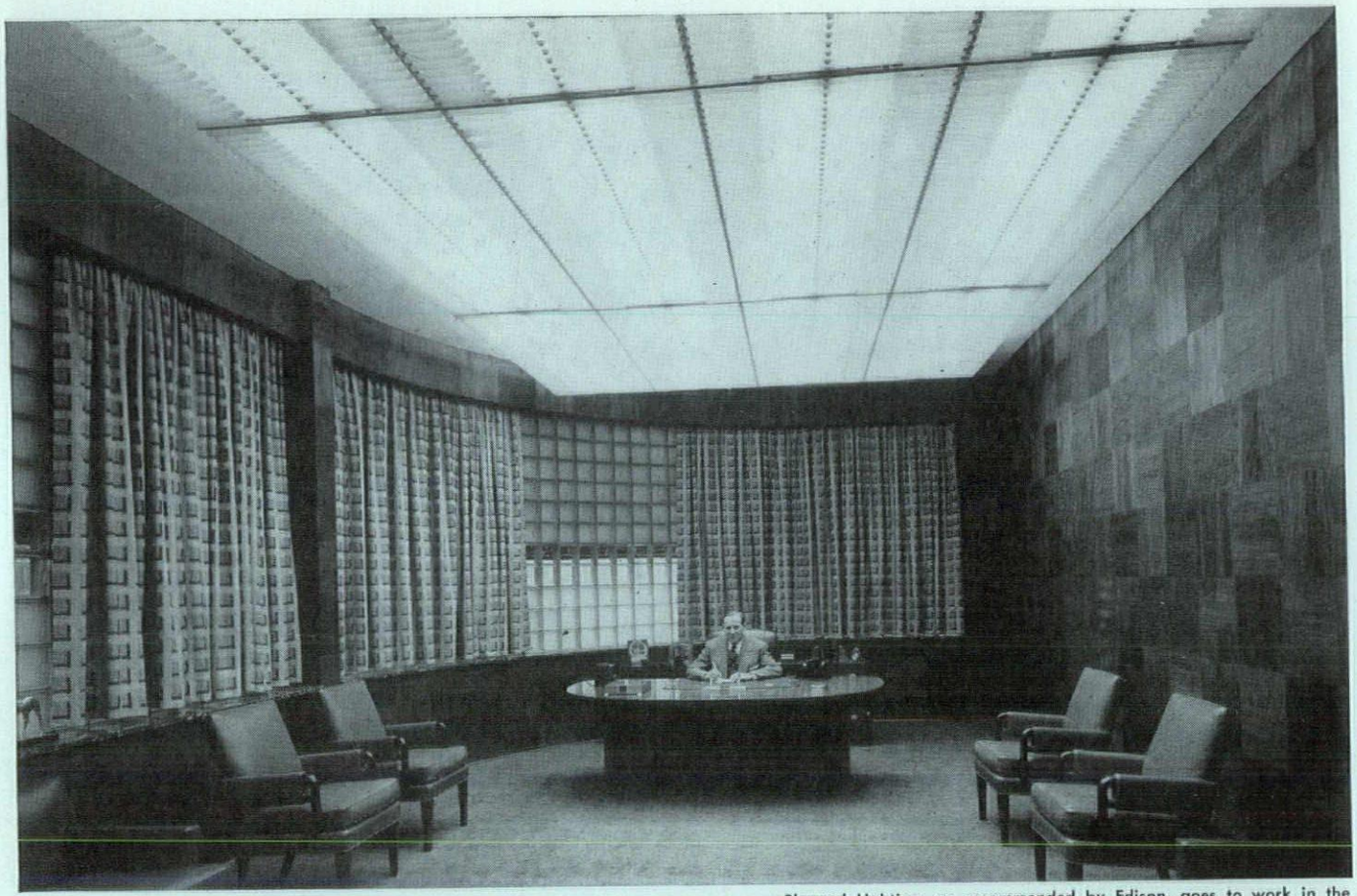

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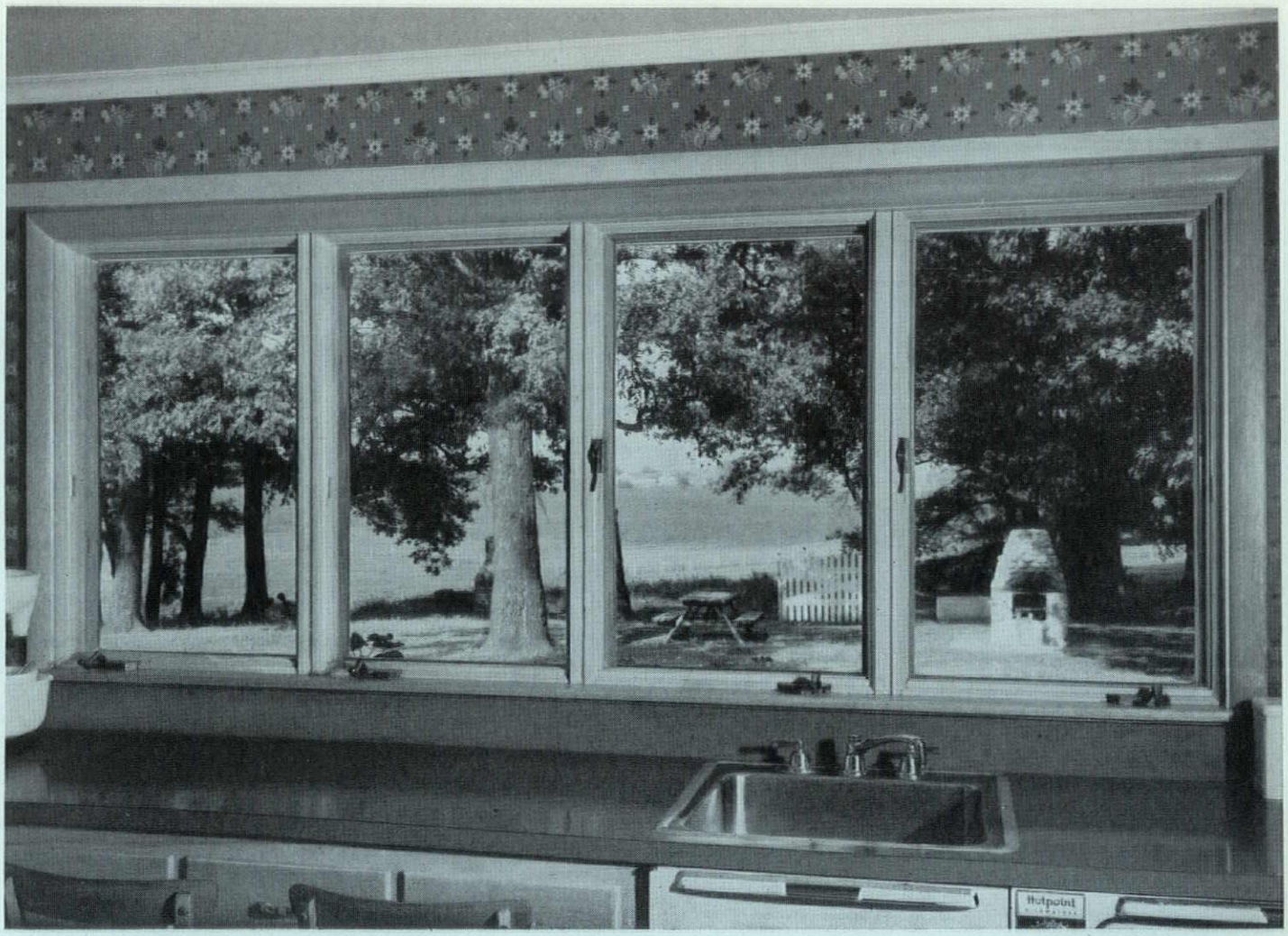

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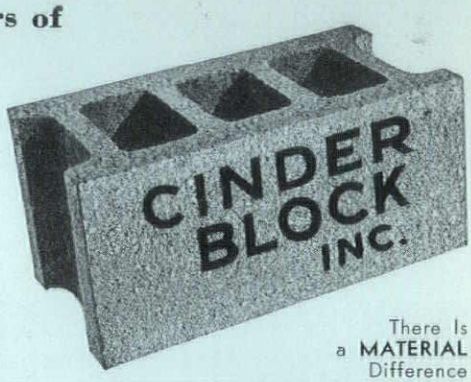

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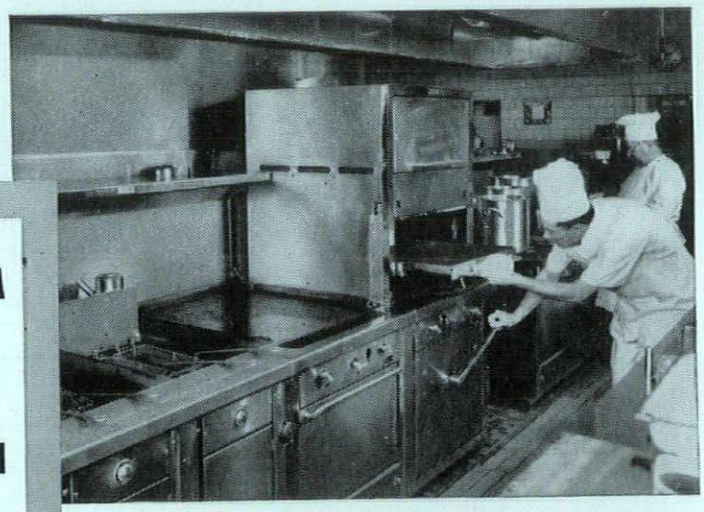

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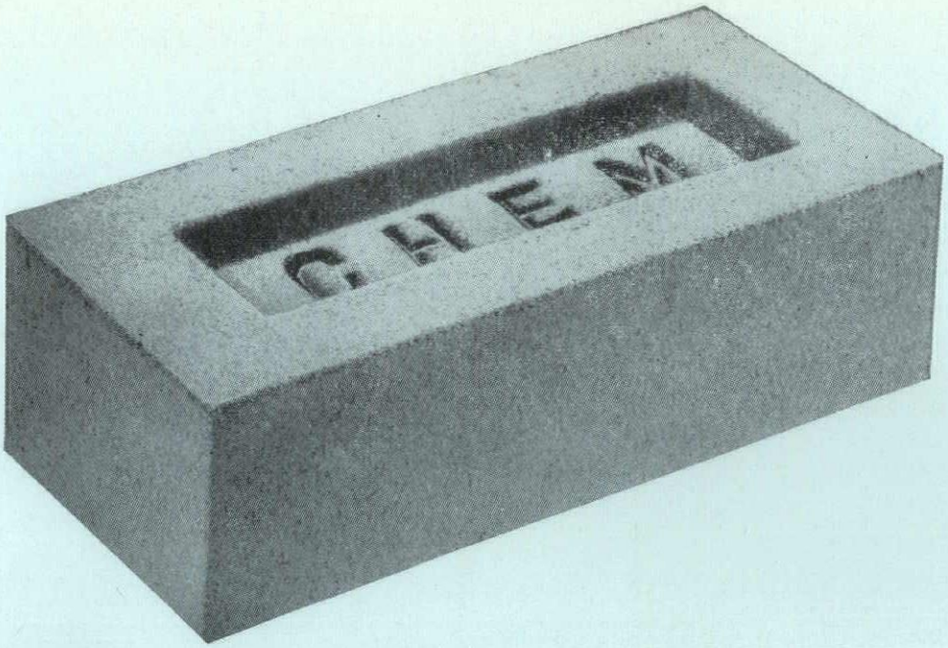

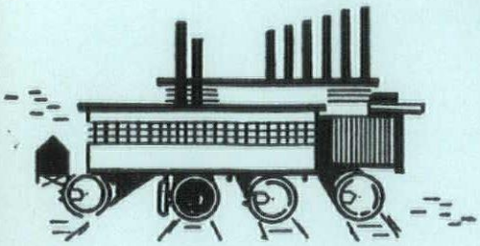

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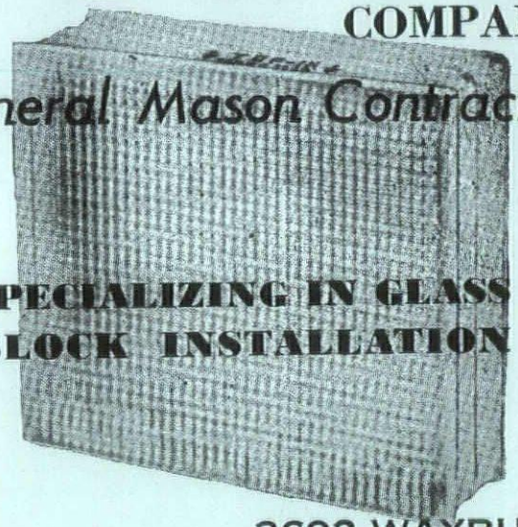

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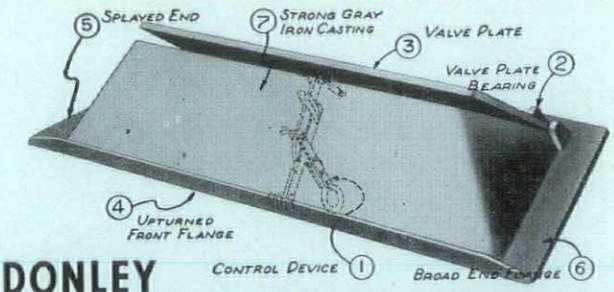

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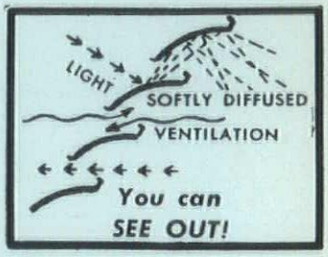

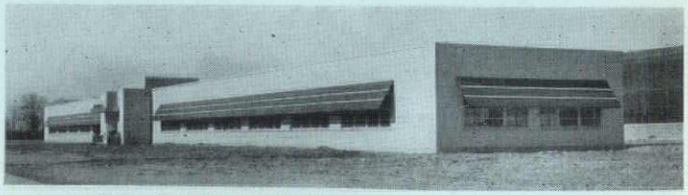

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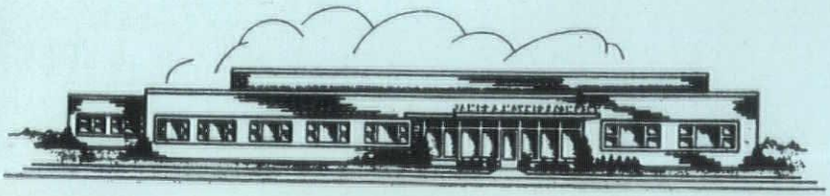

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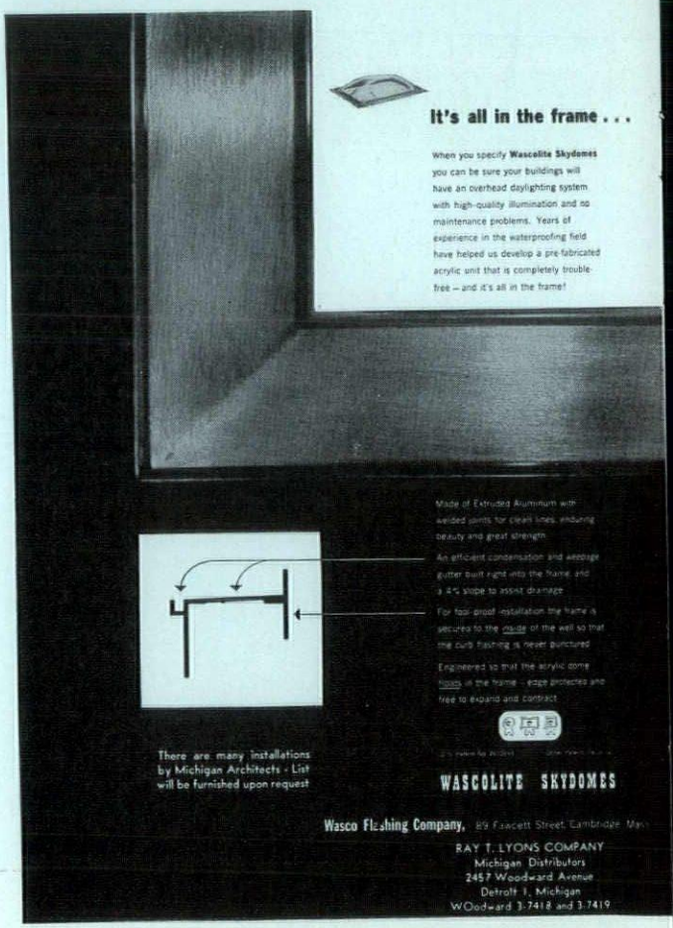

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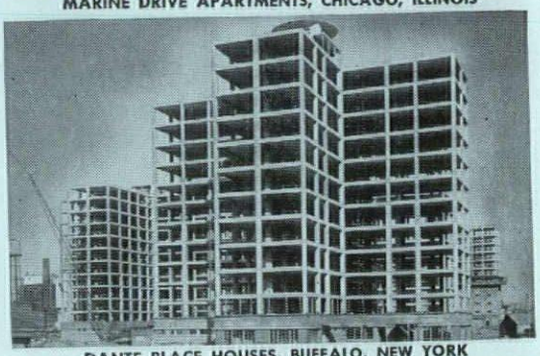

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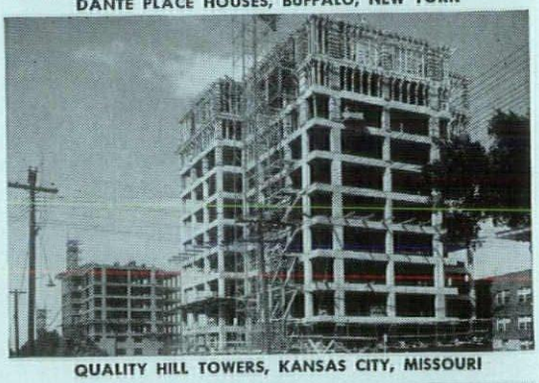

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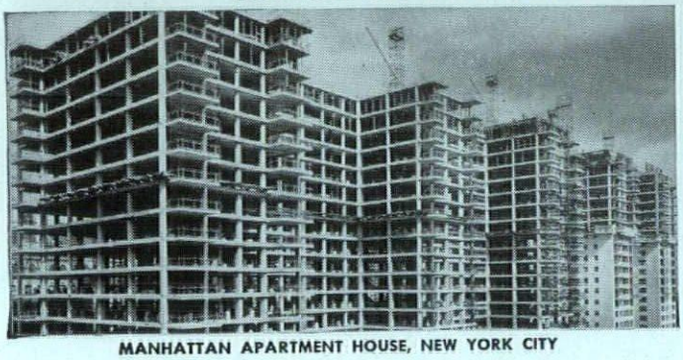

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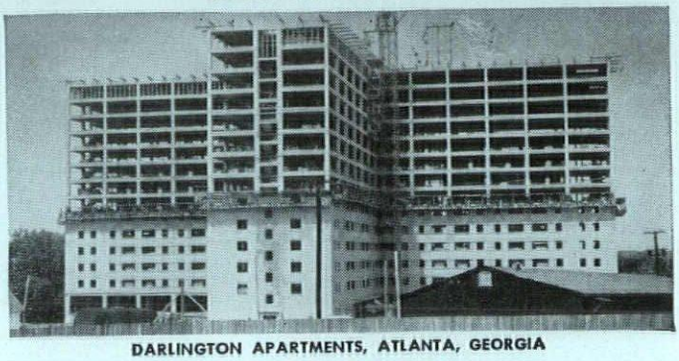

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detroit chapter

Detroit Chapter of The American Institute of Architects announces its schedule of meeting for the 1952-53 season. All are dinner meetings to be held at The Engineering Society of Detroit in the Rackham Building in Detroit, and all will be preceded by afternoon meetings of the Chapter's Board of Directors. For six of the nine meetings, the Auditorium at ESD has been engaged for lectures. All meetings are preceded by a social hour and refreshments.

Dates of the meetings are September 18, October 14, November 19, December 9, January 13, February 10, March 10, April 14 and May 11.

September 18-19, 1953, the Regional Council of the A.I.A. Great Lakes District (Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky) will meet at Detroit's Hotel Statler, and on the afternoon of the 18th the visitors will be guests at a cocktail party sponsored by the Chapter, honoring Clair W. Ditchy, recently elected president of the Institute's national body.

The cocktail party will be at the Park Shelton Hotel, and will be followed by dinner in the Rackham Building, at which the visitors will also be invited. Following dinner Ditchy will be the speaker in the auditorium. This will be Ditchy's first public appearance since his election to the top office of the national organization, and he is expected to outline the Institute's program for the year ahead.

In October the Chapter will hold its annual meeting and election of officers and directors. At this meeting also will be reports of officers and committees. The board of directors of the Michigan Society of Architects will join in this meeting.

The November meeting will have as speaker Ray Foulkrod, chief engineer of the Michigan Bell Telephone Company, who will speak on his company's building program. The company has built more than one hundred buildings since the last war.

No programs have been arranged for the other meetings, except that the May meeting is the Chapter's annual joint meeting with members of its three student branches —at the University of Michigan, University of Detroit and Lawrence Institute of Technology.

Lyall H. Askew, A.I.A. is chairman of the Chapter's program committee.

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monthly bulletin, michigan society of architects

MONTHLY BULLETIN

Michigan Society of Architects

120 Madison Ave., Detroit 26, Mich., WO. 5-3680

Official Publication of the Michigan Society of Architects: Linn Smith, President; Charles B. McGrew, 1st Vice-president; Adrian N. Langius, 2nd Vice-president; Paul A. Brysselbout, 3rd Vice-president; Ralph W. Hammett, Secretary; Elmer J. Manson, Treasurer; Directors — Roger Allen, L. Robert Blakeslee, Phillip C Haughey, Sol King, Ralph W. Knuth, James B. Morison, Leo M. Bauer.

The name "Monthly Bulletin, Michigan Society of Architects" is owned by Monthly Bulletin, Inc., a subsidiary of the Michigan Society of Architects, a Michigan non-profit corporation. Otherwise owned by Talmage C. Hughes, F.A.I.A., founder (1926), editor and publisher, Executive Secretary of the Society and of the Detroit Chapter, The American Institute of Architects.

Edited and published under the direction of Monthly Bulletin, Inc.: Adrian N. Langius, President; Sol King, Vice-president; Paul A. Brysselbout, Secretary-treasurer; Talmage C. Hughes, Resident Agent.

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1953 Midsummer Conference, August 6-8, 1953—Clarence H. Rosa, Chairman.

40th Annual Convention— Hotel Statler, Detroit, March 10-12, 1954—Lyall H. Askew, Chairman.

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architect

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Listed in Standard Rate & Data Service. For further information, see page 1.

Theodore G. Seemeyer, Jr., Advertising Director; 120 Madison Avenue, Detroit 26, Mich. WOodward 5-3680.

Address all inquiries concerning National Council of Architectural Registration Board to William L. Perkins, Secretary-treasurer, 736 Lucas Ave., Chariton. Iowa.

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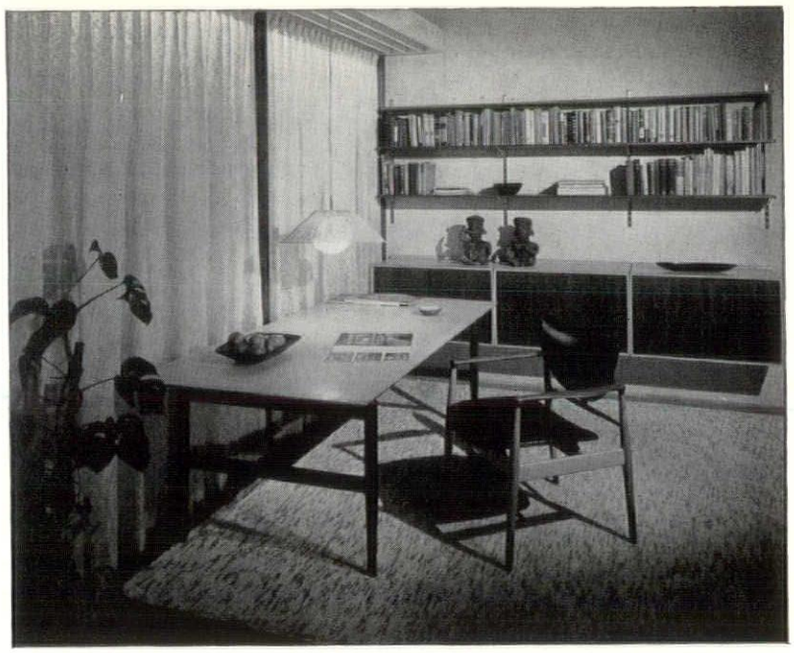

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EXECUTIVE OFFICES: EXHIBITORS BUILDING, GRAND RAPIDS 2, MICHIGAN

saarinen offices

The office building of Eero Saarinen and Associates, Architects is featured in the May issue of Architectural Forum.

Captioned "Saarinen Architecture for Saarinen," the Bloomfield Hills building is designated as "a shelter for some thoroughbred designers."

As one of three small office buildings featured, the article describes the Saarinen office as "a long brick-ended wood and glass box with some of the simplest detailing anyone is likely ever to find in any architect-designed structure," and it adds:

"The most interesting thing about this office is that, though this is the architect (and self-client) with the biggest name in this series, the building is far and away the lightest and most casual. It is frequently true that architects build themselves buildings only when business is so good they cannot spend much time on their own headquarters (wheels within wheels, within wheels, all turning the same direction), and the simplicity of this building hints that this might have been true with Saarinen. But even at that, he and his firm did not move so fast as to omit the integral grace which distinguishes their other work."

FOR SALE — Pair of wrought iron gates taken from apartment building designed by Albert Kahn in 1920. Consists of two side panels, 21" wide, 6'-9" high and two 26" x 7'-0" gates—95" opening. I. J. Cohen, 10 Ferris, TO. 8-5455.

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come to mackinac island august 6 7 & 8, 1953

Would you like to play explorer, live like a fur trader, a Jesuit padre or an early-day bearded soldier?

Clarence Rosa, Chairman of the Michigan Society of Architects Tenth Annual Midsummer Conference, bids you come to The Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island on August 6-7 and 8 and rub shoulders with the past.

The Island has a stirring history under three flags, dating back to 1634, when Jean Nicolet first saw it. Today it's a summer vacation paradise where tourists ride leisurely in horse-drawn carriages — no automobiles are allowed.

Clarence has planned this year's conference for your every pleasure. As can be seen from the program (next page), there will be very little business, and what there is will be delightfully planned for your enjoyment.

On this occasion, our new President of The American Institute of Architects, Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A., will make his first public appearance after assuming the highest office of our national body. This will be his "Inaugural Address," so to speak. Other top brass of the Institute will be our new Regional Director of the Great Lakes District, Raymond S. Kastendieck, of Gary, Ind., and Edmund R. Purves, F.A.I.A., Executive Director of The Institute, in Washington; Norman J. Schlossman, 1st V. P.

This Conference and outing is not for architects alone but for the entire building industry and their families and friends. So many have added so much to such conferences in the past.

So popular have these events become that they have been scheduled at The Grand Hotel during the second week in August for five years in advance. They are generally attended by our Governor and First Lady who are often in residence at the little Summer White House on the Island at the time.

Mr. William Stewart Woodfill, President of the Grand Hotel, is a most gracious host. He has much rich and interesting lore about the Hotel and the Island. A vast amount of information is being published in magazines, extolling the virtues of this wonderland. Myron David Orr has written a book, "The Citadel of the Lakes," which he dedicated to Mr. Woodfill. In this novel the author recalls the years when John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company took to robbing and murdering the independent traders and trappers of Mackinac Island. Their own Government's concern with Astor's terrorism caused most of the islanders to hope for British conquest. This was finally accomplished, without bloodshed, when war broke out in 1812. But the trappers' joy was all too brief. Although the British Northwest Company refrained from cutting their throats, it cut the prices of pelts far below that at which Astor's agents had been paying. And despite British occupation, American Fur continued its criminal operations.

W. Kent Cooper, the C. Allen Harlan scholar, who has been based at Cranbrook Academy of Art, doing research, will give a progress report at this Conference. Cooper has recently been awarded the Paris Prize by the Beaux Arts Institute of Design, which will enable him to travel and study in Europe for a year, beginning September 1, 1953.

As recipient of the C. Allen Harlan $5,000 scholarship, sponsored by the Michigan Society of Architects, Cooper has been making studies of the relation of industrial plants to their communities—what each can do for the other, and the relationship of the individual worker to his environment. Cooper will have on exhibition at the Conference some of the graphic results of his studies.

At Saturday morning' session, J. Robert F. Swanson, A.I.A. and Mrs. Swanson will discuss the relationship of interior furnishings and design to architecture. They have both had extensive experience in the field of interiors and have distinguished themselves in this branch of the profession.

At the Banquet, Saturday evening, John N. Richards, our former Regional Director, will be the toastmaster. At least that's what Clair Ditchy tells us. He says John doesn't know it yet, but it's a Presidential order—the first Clair has issued. John deserves the everlasting gratitude of all his constituents for the splendid job he has done. Of course, Norma will come too!

The Besser Male Chorus will again entertain at the Banquet, as they did last year. Any who have attended these events in the past need no urging. To others, let us say, "you don't know what you are missing."

Clarence H. Rosa, A.I.A., of Lansing, Chairman of MSA's 10th Midsummer Conference Committee

At 1952 Conference: Michigan's First Lady, wife of Governor G. Mennen Williams, looks on with approval, as J. Gardner Martin, of the Portland Cement Association, presents Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A. with the "Man of the Year" award

program

Thursday, August 6th—

9:00 A. M.—4:00 P. M.—
Arrival of Members and Guests
Registration (Fee $2, Ladies Free)
Open for Recreation

6:00 P. M.—
Pre-Conference Reception—
President Smith's Suite

7:00 P. M.—
Dinner—Main Dining Room
All Meals American Plan

Friday, August 7th

8:30 A.M.—
Registration Continued
Breakfast—Main Dining Room

9:30 A. M.—
Open Meeting, Board of Directors, Club Room; President Linn Smith, presiding, followed by Semi-annual Business Session, M.S.A.
Welcome to 10th Annual Midsummer Conference; Adrian N. Langius, F.A.I.A., Vice-President, M.S.A.
Greetings: Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A., President of The American Institute of Architects; Norman J. Schlossman, F.A.I.A., 1st V.P., The A.I.A.; Raymond S. Kastendieck, Great Lakes Regional Director, A.I.A.; Edmund R. Purves, F.A.I.A., Executive Director, The A.I.A.
Brief Seminar: Paul A. Brysselbout, V.P., presiding; report of C. Allen Harlan Scholar, W. Kent Cooper

12:45 P. M.—
Buffet Luncheon

2:00—5:00 P. M.—
Open for Recreation, Boat Rides, etc.

5:00 P. M.—
President's Reception — Club Room (Evening Dress Optional)
Host—Portland Cement Association "Man of the Year" Award—Who?

7:00 P. M.—
Dinner—Main Dining Room

9:30 P. M.—
Mid-Summer Conference Dance—Terrace Room

Saturday, August 8th—

8:30 A.M.—
Registration Continued
Breakfast—Main Dining Room

10:00 A. M.—
Seminar—Club Room
Charles B. McGrew, 1st Vice-President, presiding
Speaker: J. Robert F. Swanson, A.I.A.
Subject: "Interior Design"

12:30 P.M.—
Luncheon—Main Dining Room

3:00—6:00 P. M.—
Open for Recreation

6:00 P. M.—
Cocktail Hour—on your own

7:00 P. M.—
Banquet of the Tenth Annual Mid-Summer Conference — Terrace Room (Evening Dress Optional)
Toastmaster: John N. Richards, A.I.A.
Besser Male Chorus, Besser Mfg. Co., Alpena, Mich., Ralph F. Michaud, Director
Speaker: Clair W. Ditchy, F.A.I.A., President of The American Institute of Architects

10:30 P. M.—Dancing—Terrace Room

Sunday, August 9th—Departures

THE GRAND HOTEL, MACKINAC ISLAND, MICHIGAN
Please reserve for me the following accomodations in connection with The Michigan Society of Architects 10th Annual Midsummer Conference, August 6, 7 & 8, 1953:

_____Lakeview rooms, twin beds, $32 or $35 daily for two people

_____Lakeview rooms, twin beds, north or east exposure, $28 daily for two

_____Double rooms with lavatory, convenient to bath, $25 daily for two

_____Single rooms, north exposure, $16 daily

_____Single rooms with lavatory only, convenient to bath, $14 daily for two

Parlors: $15, $17.50 & $22.50
There is an added charge of 27c daily per person for sales tax, and $1.50 per person for baggage transfer from dock to hotel and return.

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Mr.
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Address _____
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Some scenes from previous midsummer conferences — at left, in center picture, is Clarence H. Rosa, A.I.A., of Lansing, Chairman of this year's Conference Committee

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Public Relations

PITTSBURGH 19, PENNSYLVANIA

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDING

July eighth
Nineteen fifty-three

Mr. Talmage C. Hughes, FAIA
Michigan Society of Architects
120 Madison Avenue
Detroit 26, Michigan

Dear Mr. Hughes:

In some future issue of the AIA Public Relations Newsletter, we would very much like to include a short case history of the splendid Michigan Society of Architects Monthly Bulletin. What we have in mind is a one-page, single-spaced typewritten sheet explaining the history, objectives, advertising and editorial policy and, if possible, the cost problems of the Bulletin.

Also, if possible, we would like to arrange with you some way of giving out, on request, some back copies of the Bulletin, so that Chapter editors might see the publication firsthand. Some of our Chapter bulletins have a great deal to be desired in their lay-outs and editorial comment and a case history of other publications like yours and Pittsburgh's "Charette" magazine will certainly offer some thought toward improvement.

Incidentally, questions about the Michigan Society of Architects' Bulletin are asked us at every one of the Public Relations Workshop sessions which we have been presenting over the country during this past six months.

I will, indeed, appreciate any help you can give me on this proposed case history for the Newsletter and at your earliest convenience.

Cordially,

Anson Campbell

Anson B. Campbell
Account Executive
American Institute of Architects

news of michigan

An open invitation is extended to architects and engineers to join the newly organized Architects Golf League. The League still has openings for duffers who are interested in improving their games by indulging in weekly divot-digging sessions each Wednesday. League golfers play on three courses—choosing the one most convenient—Palmer Park, 6:00 A. M.; Redford, 6:30 A. M.; Warren Valley, 3:30 P. M.

For further information call George Sommers at WOodward 5-8180.

Bob Beerbower gave the second of his series of demonstrations on the fabrication of Flexicore at Price Brothers' plant in Livonia, Michigan on June 29.

Noted in the throng were George H. Miehls, Frederick J. Schoettley, Raymond C. Perkins, Paul R. Sewell and Ray W. Covey.

After the inspection the group was taken to Arbor-Lill for cocktails and dinner, where a movie was shown demonstrating the use of Flexicore.

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the hammetts go to europe

Professor Ralph W. Hammett, A.I.A., of the University of Michigan College of Architecture and Design, has resigned as secretary of the Michigan Society of Architects, it is announced by Linn Smith, Society president.

Hammett has been granted a sabbatical leave from the University for the academic year 1953-54. He will sail from New York on September 10, to spend nine months in Europe, and he will attend the International Congress of Architects in Lisbon, Portugal, as a delegate from the Society, Smith said.

While on the Society's board of directors during the past two years, Hammett served as chairman of the committee on Education and Research. In this capacity he was in charge of the Society's several scholarships and competitions.

architect meets the magic rug

to establish his own architectural practice in Detroit, he took a step that speedily led to his becoming a full-time carpet man instead. It happened almost by accident, but he is pleased with the business prospects in the floor covering field, though far from ready to concede that plans for professional practice are at an end.

"Without really planning it, here is an architect who pitched himself into the middle of a carpeting business, and had to make it run," is the way he sums it up.

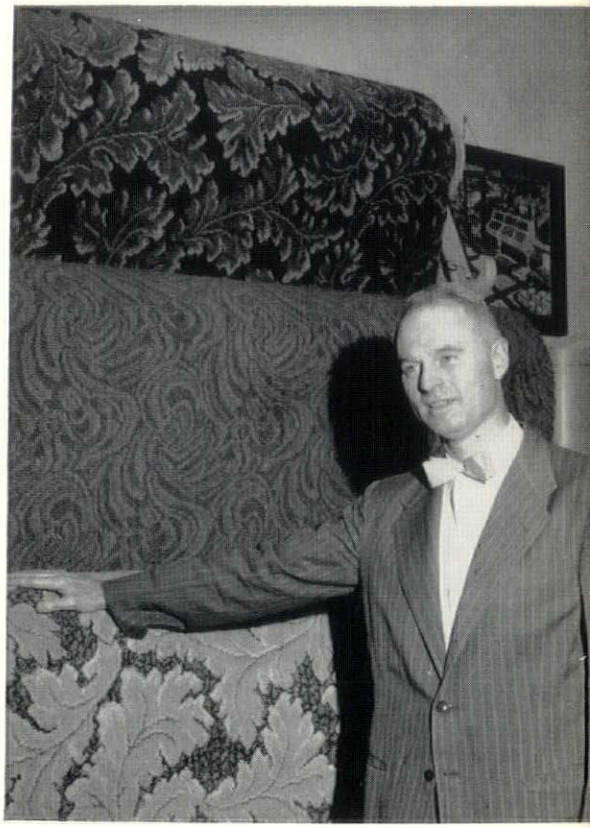
It happened this way — after the usual years with large firms, including Albert Kahn Associated Architects and Engineers, Inc., and H. E. Beyster and Associates, Inc., Messing felt it was time to go out "upon his own." Like many young professional men, he realized that the period during which it would be necessary to develop a new practice before it became sufficiently remunerative might be a long while — and decided to have a sideline investment that would bring him in some income until this happened.

The floor covering field looked attractive to him — analyzing it, Messing felt that there are significant points where his training and experience in architecture would fit well into the secondary field, and that it would be a logically related move.

These were especially: Type of material used, texture of the selected material, color, pattern, and scale of detail involved.

The architect works with these elements—and so, he realized, does the man who installs carpet, tile, or other covering.

So he became interested in Mumford's, an east side company handling floor coverings of all types, shades and blinds, and related items. In November, 1952, he unexpectedly found he had to take over as active manager of the firm in which he had an interest, because of the serious illness of Roy Mumford, who had founded the business twelve years earlier. Three months later this led to Messing's buying out the firm, but continuing to do



ARTHUR H. MESSING, A.I.A.

business under the established firm name. So today he says, "the tail is wagging the dog. . . But this could be more profitable."

It was not entirely easy to transfer architectural knowledge and procedure into floor covering work. Messing frankly says that he made mistakes — in bidding and in buying.

"But every time you make a mistake you learn. I've had to learn this business the hard way," he adds

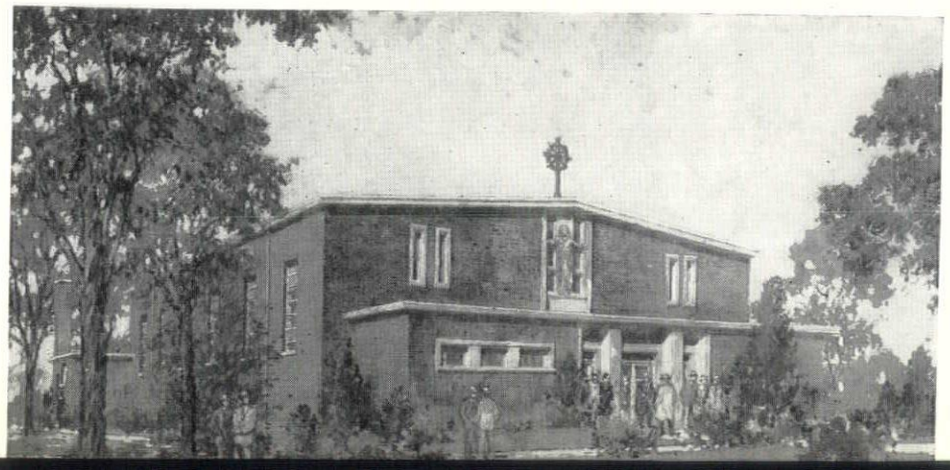
Messing is still well satisfied with the changeover, and convinced that his architectural preparation has been of definite help in the carpeting field. Some of the same factors are involved, but the attitude toward them is different in many respects. Thus, the two fields both are concerned with materials, with schedules of delivery and installation, with the intricately related problems of building as a whole.

The architect can specify what is to be done — he can write down the specifications for the covering, and go into some detail — "1/8 inch Goodyear rubber," for instance.

"But you find you need to know a lot more," says Messing, "when the actual selection and installation are to be done. The floor covering man has to delve into the problems of what kind of paste to use to meet the situation, how to lay the covering material, and into the problems of cost."

Since taking over the firm, Messing has shown his progressive interest in the field by expanding his service, through provision of space in his building for new firm, not formally affiliated, which handles the laying and installation aspect of floor covering.

St. Dennis Church Auditorium, Royal Oak, Mich. George F. & Gerald G. Diehl, Architects. Rendering by Frederick Crowther.



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low-fee architects

Architectural bodies in many states are evidencing concern because public officials and other representing semi-public and private interests are not aware of the fact that in many cases high construction costs are a reflection of poor professional services, and that, consequently, these clients are selecting architects purely on the basis of the costs of such services.

These organizations have concluded that it is their duty to inform such clients of architects that in most cases lower fees mean lower services, which are penny-wise and pound-foolish.

The respect the client holds for the architect will rise or fall with the influence he exerts on the public. Mediocre plans and specifications and weak business practices will do more harm to the profession, to the owner and to the individual practitioner than is at first apparent.

While undoubtedly there are some architects who can be criticized for the poor quality of documents they produce, even with a fair fee, it can be expected that when a commission has been taken for a low fee the practitioner will attempt to find a means to avoid loss. It is then that the client may find that his work has been turned over to men of lesser experience, and that insufficient time has been allowed for preliminaries; necessary important details omitted from the working drawings, specifications and checking slighted.

The fallacy of the low fee is that the client has saved a relatively small amount but at the cost of a good deal more for contractor's extras, to say nothing of a poorer building.

architects in the news this month

Appointment of the distinguished architect John Ekin Dinwiddie, A.I.A. as dean of the Tulane university school of architecture is announced by Dr. Rufus C. Harris, president of the university.

Mr. Dinwiddie, whose work has won numerous awards and citations, will assume his duties September 1. He will succeed Professor Buford L. Pickens, who recently became head of the school of architecture at Washington university in St. Louis, Mo.

The new dean's father, the late William Dinwiddie, also was a noted architect, and designed several of the better known structures in New Orleans and New York of several decades ago. He was a first cousin of the late Dr. Albert Bledsoe Dinwiddie, president of Tulane 1918-1935.

Mr. Dinwiddie only recently turned to the teaching of architecture, following a notable career in the practice of the profession in San Francisco.

Between 1930, when he was licensed, and 1942 he received twelve national awards, including the first annual prize from House and Garden magazine in 1938, 1939, and 1940.

From 1942 to 1945 he was engaged in war housing under the federal public housing administration, and was associated with the design of a total of 50,000 units.

He re-entered private practice in 1950. Since then, one of his houses has been cited by House Beautiful as among the best twelve in twelve years, and one by Architectural Record as among the best 40 houses in America.

In 1950 his design of the Honolulu Oil company building in Midland, Texas, was selected by The American Institute of Architects for inclusion in a traveling exhibit of the Department of State for display in foreign countries.

Born in 1905, Mr. Dinwiddie received a bachelor of science degree in architectural design from the University of Michigan in 1925. He spent two years in graduate study in city planning under the famed Eliel Saarinen and attended a number of schools of allied arts.

He has been a visiting lecturer at the University of California, and the past year became a visiting faculty member of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and of the University of Pennsylvania.

His work has been published or discussed in many leading architectural journals, and has been included in two histories of architecture and many books on contemporary design.

In 1949 he served on the national jury of honor awards of The A.I.A.

news

california

Welton Becket, A.I.A., of Los Angeles, has been reappointed supervising architect of the University of California at Los Angeles, for its $54,000,000 campus building program, a position he has held since 1948.

indiana

Eero Saarinen, F.A.I.A. has been chosen as architect for the new senior college to be erected by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, at Fort Wayne, Ind., which will replace Concordia College. The project is estimated to cost $4,400,000.

kentucky

William S. Arrasmith and William C. Tyler, Jr., architects, and Edward W. Baldwin, engineer, have announced the opening of their offices in the Madrid Building, Louisvile, Ky. Arrasmith and Baldwin moved from the Lincoln Bank Building, Tyler from the Heyburn Building.

new hampshire

Richard Koehler has been elected president of the New Hampshire Chapter, A.I.A.; Leo P. Provost, vice-president; Edward B. Miles, secretary; Robert Snodgrass, treasurer, and Archer Hudson, director.

new jersey

Paul W. Drake, A.I.A., of Summit, N. J., has been appointed by Governor Alfred E. Driscoll to the N. J. State Board of Architects. He is senior member of the firm of Drake & Tuthill Associates, Architects & Engineers.

ohio

Charles C. Coleman, architect, of Cleveland, Ohio, has been elected to the administrative board of Cornell University Council. He is a graduate of Cornell, class of 1912, and has been president of the Cornell Club of Cleveland, president of the Association of Alumni of the College of Architecture at Cornell, and general chairman of the alumni and of his class. Mr. and Mrs. Coleman have left for Norway, where they are studying contemporary architecture there and in other Scandinavian countries and other parts of Europe.

John Walker Little, A.I.A. has announced his affiliation with the Cleveland engineering organization of Fisher and Associates. Little, who once served as supervising architect for the Cleveland Union Terminal Buildings, will be in charge of Fisher construction work.

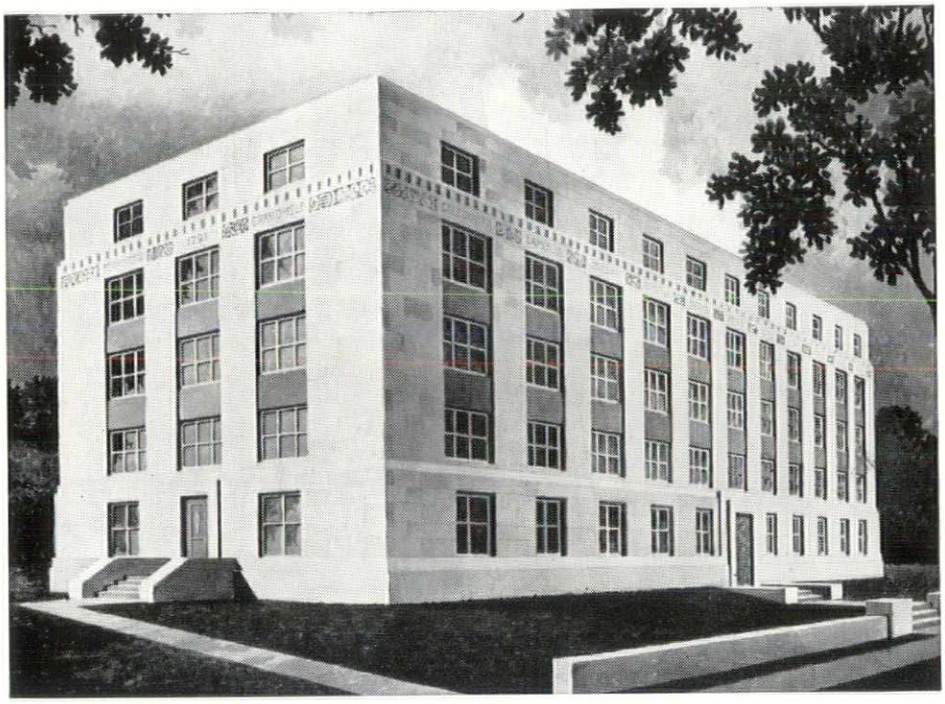
A wealthy Italian, Paolo Masieri, of Udine, has asked Venice's Monument Commission for permission to build a modern architectural school on the banks of the Grand Canal, in memory of his architect son, Angelo Masieri, who was killed in a traffic accident last year. Masieri has asked Frank Lloyd Wright to design the buildings.

died

Ehrenfried Beyer, 64, in Staten Island Hospital, June 4, only 24 hours after suffering a stroke. Employed by the Manhattan firm of Wortmann and Sons. With that firm and others, he had helped in designing such buildings as the New School for Social Research, buildings at Idlewild and Newark airports, and theatres built by Broadway showman Florenz Ziegfeld.

William R. Dubois, 73, in Casper, Wyoming, May 31. Dean of Wyoming architects and former mayor of Cheyenne. Practiced in Wyoming from 1898 until his retirement in 1947. Designed the main wings of Wyoming's State Capitol, many structures at the University of Wyoming, as well as hospitals, hotels and other buildings. Was first president of Wyoming Chapter, A.I.A. He was one of the original engineers on the Panama Canal project when the French tried to build a waterway between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Joseph Schwen Wei Ma, A.I.A., June 10, in Los Angeles, Calif. One of the first Chinese architects in California, he was a graduate of USC School of Architecture. Member of Van Nuys Masonic Lodge, Kiwanis Club and Alpha Lambda Fraternity, Southern California Chapter, A.I.A.



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MINORU YAMASAKI

is architecture a business or a profession?

Minoru Yamasaki, A.I.A., of the Detroit and St. Louis firm of Leinweber, Yamasaki & Hellmuth, was a recent speaker before the Detroit Chapter, A.I.A. After showing a number of slides of architectural examples, he delivered the following address:

I can't put it off any longer. So let's get into the topic I chose for the evening which is, "Is Architecture a Business or a Profession?"

Obviously the answer is that Architecture is a profession, but looking at both the status and the work of our profession in the City of Detroit, (and I can't even call it our fair city), I am sure that all of us have wondered at some time or another whether Architecture has not become just a business.

To get the record straight, I am not talking about our business practices or the ability of our group to make a dollar, I am talking about the idealism which we all say is inherent in our daily work. . . the idealism, which is the drive to make our world a better place in which to live. And physically, who beyond we architects can contribute more to the Utopian environment to which most of us aspire.

Yet, here in Detroit, where if only because of the size of many of our organizations, we could have been a powerful voice in the determination of the environment, we have contributed little if anything to our ever-decaying city.

We have been strangely silent partners in the monstrous crime of letting Detroit become one of the ugliest, most unpleasant cities in which to live in the whole of the United States.

In commercial areas, in industrial districts and in residential sections, there is almost inescapable ugliness.

Look at our newer shopping streets—Grand River, Gratiot and Livernois, . . . confusions of neon, of building heights, of contradictory designs. If order is basic in architecture, this can only be anarchy.

Look at our industrial areas — buildings crowded into spaces where no buildings should be — walls so close to each other that we can almost feel them gasping for air.

Look at our central areas where the softness of grass and trees are a rarity, where hard, parched, dusty piles of masonry, of never-ending pavement become unbearably hot in the summer and are canyons for freezing winds in winter.

Look at our residential streets, row on row of like boxes. One with a blue roof, the next with a green one—houses where the limitations are so shackling that it is hopeless to make them even decoratively pleasant.

Perhaps my description sounds exagerated, but those of us who travel Detroit with open eyes know full well that this and worse is tragically true.

What have been the obstacles for us as architects in the face of this situation?

Are the pressures so great and our influence so limited that we can only assume the role of bystanders?

And while we stick our collective heads in the sand —civilization will steam roll by and our role will become more useless by the moment.

Or is it because in our daily practice we have been seduced so often by the purveyors of selfish interest—or their fellow travelers—that their thinking has become our thinking?

In other words, is our role in society draftsmen who have become numb to those fine architectural ideals with which we each began our careers?

Many of us have asked ourselves these same questions, when we have been faced with compromise of one type or another.

I had bad twinges of conscience while putting this talk together, at the memories of moments of weakness when keeping the job seemed much more important than fighting to the end for an obviously better solution.

The hard fact remains that we have not upheld our responsibilities to our city, or Detroit would not be in the condition that it is today.

We can try to place the blame on irresponsible builders, but we cannot escape the fact that our training and only our training can prepare for the kind of leadership that society should have to fashion the environment, and if we had provided that leadership the builders would have been forced to follow.

Each and every piece of architecture that we design is a vital part of the city and the relation of that building to the city and the city to the building must be completely analyzed and respected.

And our responsibilities are not only to the buyer of the structure we design, but to the people who use it and visit it, to the people who live in the building surrounding it and to the people who see the building as they pass by.

Simply put, we have economic responsibilities, aesthetic responsibilities and social responsibilities.

And I'm afraid that our cost-conscious world has driven us into a corner where we always recognize economic responsibilities, sometimes aesthetic responsibilities and hardly ever our social responsibilities.

But our slums, our confusion of new buildings, our ugly city comprise overwhelming and undeniable evidence that this short-sighted economy in which our society wildly indulges today is no economy at all.

If those before us had exercised some larger degree of social and aesthetic thinking we might have had a better springboard on which to launch our visions of a fine environment.

But this is wishful thinking for the general direction which we so hastily pursue today can only end in having our children make identical criticisms of ourselves.

There must be some excuses for the fact that we as a profession have not taken stronger leadership in the development of our environment.

We've heard the standard cliche's such as, "The client is always right;" "It isn't practical"; "It isn't economical" so often, that they have become scare-words in building, like crying "Communist" at the first sign of progressive thinking.

We all know the client isn't always right, the most pointed example being the frustrated architect bureaucrat who controls so much of building today.

Not so long ago I heard several officials in public housing actually crow because some architect had designed some barrack-looking housing that was bid at the low price of $1,700 a room. Public housing may have had its hour, but how about the years that people will spend living in these grim surroundings.

Perhaps you've heard of the story of Mies Van DerRohe and the librarian at the Illinois Institute of Technology. An argument between them over the color of paint in the library waxed so hot that it reached the President's Office. He decided in favor of Mies.

A few months later the librarian left to take a better job elsewhere.

Perhaps the color of paint isn't all important, but it could have been and very often is a more serious problem that divides architect and client. Buildings almost invariably last much longer than the client, so why should his fears or unfamiliarity with architecture distort the building for the countless others who will use it.

As for economy and practicality, I believe there should be only one kind of economic thinking in architecture or in the building of our environment, not only by architects but by society as a whole; and that is to work toward the design of an environment which will give us the most efficient framework within which to pursue the happiness we so urgently seek.

The realm of aesthetics in architecture has been so thoroughly discussed, it certainly does not need additional verbiage from me.

In passing, I'd like to quote from Emerson, who in the middle of the Nineteenth Century understood the essence of beauty in architecture so much better than many of us.

He said:

"Beauty rests on necessities. The line of beauty is the result of perfect economy. The cell of the beehive is built at that angle which gives the most strength with the least wax. The bone or the quill of the bird gives the most alar strength with the least weight.

"There is not a particle to spare in natural structures. There is a compelling reason in the uses of the plant for every novelty of color or form; and our art saves material by more skillful arrangement; and reaches beauty by taking every superfluous ounce that can be spared from a wall and keeping its strength in the poetry of columns."

He continues:

"If a man can build a plain cottage with such symmetry as to make all the fine palaces look cheap and vulgar; can take such advantages of nature that all her powers serve him, making use of geometry instead of expense, tapping a mountain for his water jet, causing the sun and moon to seem only the decorations of his estate, this is still the legitimate dominion of beauty."

Only a look at today's buildings in Detroit and we realize how much improved our environment would have been if we had carefully followed Emerson's beliefs in the design of our buildings.

One other point I would like to make on aesthetics is that it is probable here that those of us who profess to practice modern architecture err most seriously.

With overemphasis on aesthetics we tend to do exactly that which we have been criticizing our predecessors for doing; that is to start with a particularly desired form and stuff the functions into it naturally or unnaturally. Whether the form is a Greek temple or a clean glass box, the error is deliberate and unworthy. Unfortunately, many of our more beautiful modern buildings are guilty of this sin.

We have another regrettable inheritance from our predecessors, and that is the habit of promiscuous monumentality.

Monumentality was the universal prescription for everything, from banks to fire stations, to garages by the architects of our fake classic era and we seem to be having difficulty completely eradicating the disease.

Unfortunately, even some of the better examples of our Architecture today show signs of being afflicted. And each of us has succumbed to its temptation at one time or another.

I remember several years ago, in making sketches for a County-City Building in Port Huron, I despaired because I was unable to make it any higher than four stories. I wanted to make it a landmark to dominate park and river.

Years later I thought of how much better the building would have been, had it been conceived as a friendly one-story building, built around lovely garden courts.

Buildings should be friendly and inviting, not overwhelming, or dominating.

The atmosphere of a fine restaurant in an old house is much to be preferred to some of the overpretentious dining rooms in our hotels even though food and prices are on a par.

The value of understatement is important and necessary in architecture and the universal appreciation of that understatement is indispensable to the cause of better architecture.

So often we hear the complaint, "but it looks so bare," but remember that it only looks bare in contrast to the over-ornamented surroundings to which we have so long been accustomed.

With the elimination of misused monumentality or ostentation as a requirement for architecture, we can achieve the friendly, pleasant surroundings which should form the background of the delightfully informal way of life which is ours to enjoy.

It is in the field of social responsibility, I believe, where we have been most derelict.

To highlight the architect's possible contribution to society, let me read the letter of a thirteen-year-old girl in England describing the proposal to build a new town at Stevenage.

"The present Government intends to enlarge and make Stevenage into a satellite town. Most Stevenage people greatly oppose this proposition because it will mean that some of the beautiful old houses, of which we are so proud, will have to be condemned. Large smoky factories will spring up and perhaps crowded houses will be built to accommodate the homeless crowds of Londoners who intend to live here.

"A group of inhabitants have raised funds among themselves and are going to argue the plan out in court. These men, mostly owning land and houses, have lived in Stevenage, all, or for the greater part, of their lives. They do not want to see untidy smoky buildings appearing in place of their green fields. They do not want to live among strangers. All they want is to see the familiar sight of farmhands, trudging along the country lanes, leading their old cart horses and loads of sweet-smelling hay, everyone knowing everyone else, sharing each others' troubles and pleasures and leading a happy and carefree life.

"Yet there is another side to the question, the side of the poor, homeless Londoners, with nowhere to live but a damp back room shared by many families. Why should these be deprived of a home? Why should they live in misery, when a peaceful country town could be altered to accommodate them? This scheme will cost the Government many millions of pounds and the country is short of money and badly needs more food. It is worth the trouble and money? Which side will win? Will Stevenage rejoice in the near future, or bitterly remember the day of its downfall? Soon the answer will be known."

At the moment Stevenage remains the beautiful unspoiled country town that our ancestors knew.

The people of Stevenage can have both —the preservation of much of the beauty of the area and the homes for the Londoners.

The thoughtful plans which can accomplish this is a challenge for architects and in the resolution of such challenges lies the greatest satisfaction that might be found in our work.

Though the problems we meet daily may be more mundane and minor in comparison, I think you will all agree that similar challenges are there.

Had we been fully conscious at all times of our responsibilities to people in the places where they live and the places where they work, Detroit would not be littered with housing, industrial buildings and office structures and streets which are terribly unpleasant places in which to be.

The Gratiot Urban Redevelopment Area has received much publicity for the past year in our press. It was a serious threat at one time that the builders would take it over and develop it with 16 ft. lots

. . . a slum of tomorrow if not today. This is still a possibility and if it is allowed to happen it would be a tragic scuttling of opportunity for a better Detroit. Yet there has been very little voice from us, the architects, on this.

Recently at a conference in Ann Arbor I suggested that many industrial buildings could be divided into a series of smaller buildings for the various operations with grass and trees between. The advantages, of course, would be the greater feeling of dignity and security for the worker, and the more pleasant surroundings brought about by closer contact with the outdoors.

There was opposition to this on the grounds that it was unsound thinking economically.

Perhaps that is so in the light of today's economic thinking, but I venture it will not be long before our workers will demand better conditions in which to work and justifiably so.

I am afraid that if we had to work just one week in some of the structures we set up for our fellow man we would rather drastically change our philosophy of architecture.

Eero Saarinen's G. M. Technical Center must be a wonderful place in which to work. The same sunlight which fills those buildings and the same grass and trees can make life more pleasant for the more average workers in the more average buildings.

Bringing more and larger green areas into our central districts could be another facet in the recognition of our social responsibilities.

The civic design committee of this group recently suggested that the bus shelters in Capitol Park be moved to the center of the area and that the park be enlarged with more trees and more landscaping. With the bus shelters in the center, people on the perimeter sidewalks could better enjoy the park. I see by the newspapers that the suggestion is being violently discussed and I hope we architects will be able to do more than just sit at the ringside. What is just another dirty area of Detroit can be rehabilitated into one of its bright spots.

When we first proposed the garden setback for the Federal Reserve Bank there was strong opposition, surprisingly enough from fellow architects and also from some members of the staff in Washington.

As you can see we, won out and this spring that block of Fort Street will be filled with the charm of spring flowers, the brilliant colors of 4,000 tulips and of the magnolias should do wonders to the drabness that is characteristic of that part of downtown Detroit.

If every block of our central areas possessed many such gardens think of the pleasures that would daily be ours.

Finally, I would like to ask some questions as regards more participation by architects in the development of our city.

The chief purpose of the civic design committee, I have felt—and I think that the others will bear me out—has been to criticize some plan which has already been initiated by some agency of the city. In other words, we are a minor art commission without portfolio, or we are after the fact.

The role of the architect in our society I've always heard should be a creative one.

Could we initiate a small citizen's committee for Detroit, perhaps comprised of city government representatives, business and industry representatives, labor, education and architect representatives whose work would be to propose projects for the rehabilitation of Detroit.

I was thinking of Lou Kahn's tremendous talk of last month and his inspiring leadership for Philadelphia. Leonard Parker, who was sitting next to me at that talk, said afterward, "The design of one building seems so insignificant when compared with all that."

And would we bolster that consultant by appointing a committee to help and to advise him?

I know that if we put our heads together there must be many ways in which we can help Detroit become a truly fine City.

And as for our daily work, whether we work on schools, on commercial buildings, on housing or industrial buildings, I believe that we should be less practical and more dreamers.

I heard a talk recently in Detroit by Clark Dillworth, A.D.A. District Attorney of Philadelphia, and probably the next governor of Pennsylvania. He said, "Do not be afraid to dream. We are badly in need of more vision in our terribly practical world."

Does that not apply to architecture as well as it does to politics?

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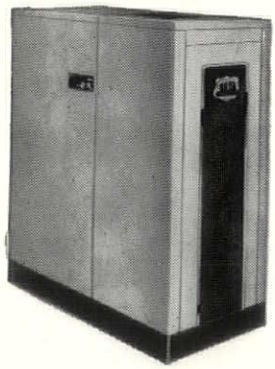

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store design & selling

By Trace Christenson, Jr., A.I.A., former Director of Design, The Kawneer Company

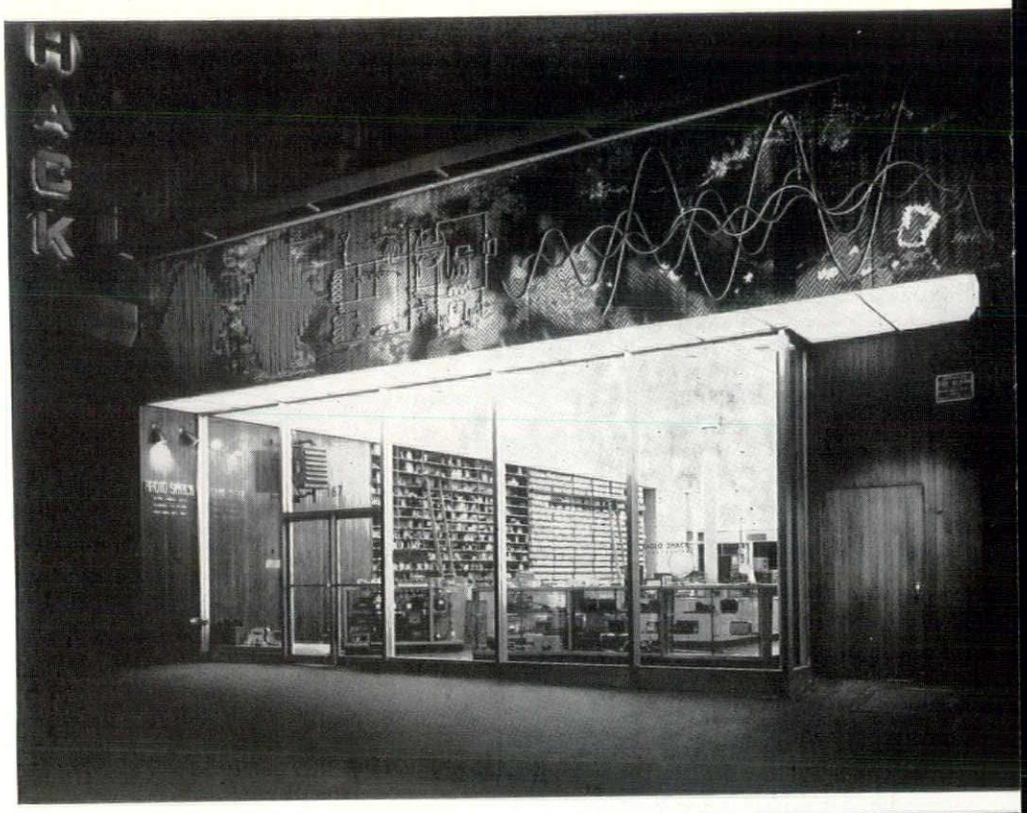
There's a new trend in store design—no longer do we build a monument to ourselves or copy the motifs of old Greek temples in an attempt to impress the customer and hope that he will buy our merchandise. We have learned by the hard experience of depression and competition that we must plan the store as a "machine for selling"—selling our merchandise. We have learned that the man on the street does not appreciate the rococo or modernistic for any length of time and soon tires of the only characteristic it can boast—novelty. Store planning today is a science—a science based on the functional use of materials, color, and light.

So if we are going to make our store a "machine for selling" we must know something about the mechanics of the machine or in other words merchandising principles. Every smart merchant realizes that he is selling three general types of merchandise—impulse, covenience, and demand. Applying this principle to store planning, it is only logical to place the demand goods in that part of the store which will result in the customer passing the convenience, and particularly the impulse goods, in going to or from the demand goods section. By the same token then, the impulse merchandise should be strategically located near cash registers and other points of final termination of a sale, and should be well lighted and displayed in order to appeal quickly and dramatically to the eye of the customer. This, then, is the functional approach to store planning and if used as such, avoiding the temptation of thinking in terms of pure decoration, will result in a simple and appealing machine which will automatically increase sales.

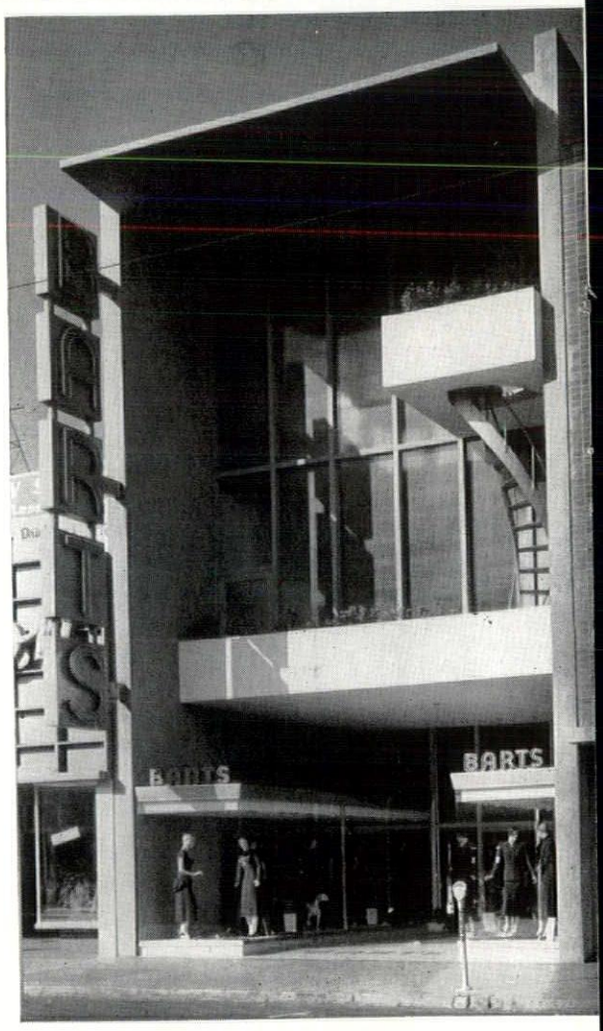
A successful store should first of all have a good location, second, good management and third, be designed functionally. The interior should be well departmentalized in order to make it easy for the customer to find the particular goods he is interested in and to view the merchandise without being confused by competing articles. It should provide good circulation by the placement of display cases and/or merchandise such that it is inviting and easy for the customer to get to and from the point of sale. It should use color and light to display the merchandise in such a way that it will attract attention, be easy to look at, and be truthful in its expression of textures and colors; and, of course, service to the store and to the customer should be planned for efficiency, expediency, and simplicity.

The store front must quickly and properly identify the place of business by the use of large simple letters and by the avoidance of lengthy or complicated names The front should display the merchandise in such a way that the customer can quickly determine availability, quality, and general price levels. And above all, the store front should serve as a barrier to the elements only and not to the customer. The three R's of store front design are identification, display, and invitation—based on the principle of doing a job of selling merchandise.

Whether it's Fifth Avenue or Main Street, the same general principles apply. Local conditions naturally will vary, but using the proper tools and applying them to the job at hand will overcome competition and customer resistance.



Carl Koch & Associates, Architects



Above: Confer & Willis, Architects

Left: Cyril W. Lemmon, Architect

Trace Christenson is a member of the Western Michigan Chapter, A.I.A.

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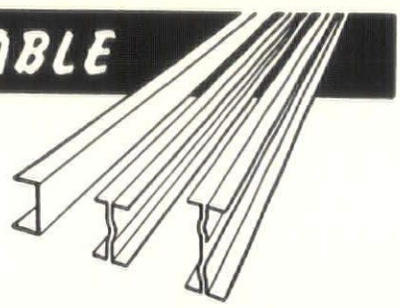

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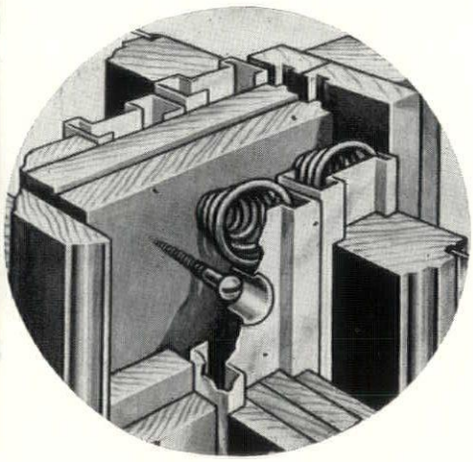

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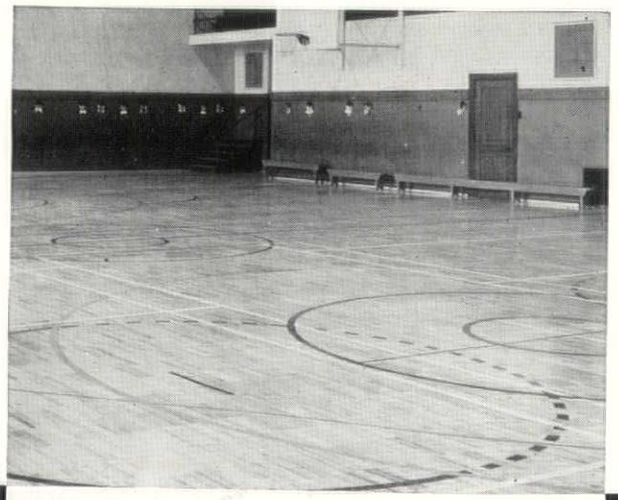

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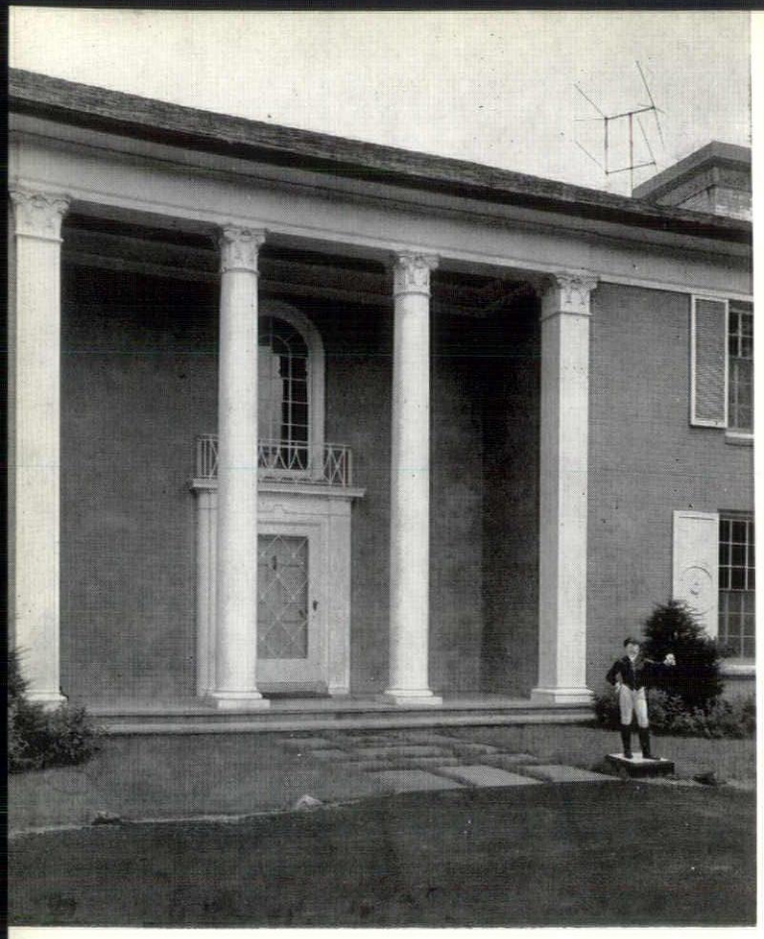


Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley A. Carter
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Architect: G. J. Hanniken, A.I.A.
Detroit, Michigan

photographs by elmer l. astleford

This Georgian home is located on a high and picturesque setting in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

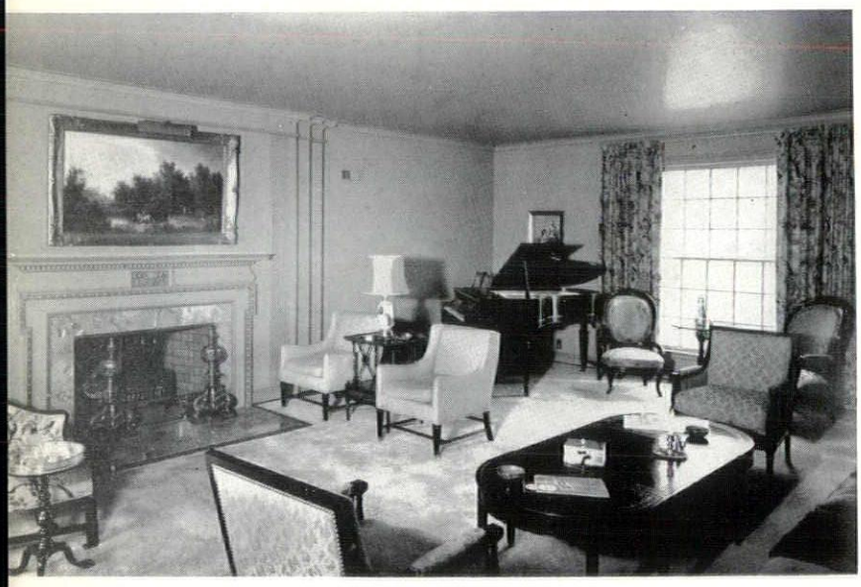
The owners desired an architectural style which they had always admired and one which they knew had withstood the test of time.

The site offered somewhat of a challenge as there was practically no large level area on which to place the house. This was solved by placing it along a high ridge and using the excavated material to build a large terrace in the rear.

The terrace is ideally situated as it overlooks a small restful lake, which nestles at the bottom of a long, heavily wooded slope. During the late afternoon the house provides shade over the entire area.

Advantage was taken of the high elevation of the house to locate the garage at the basement level with the walls just high enough above the house grade to form a garden wall.

Since the house is fairly large and the owners had expressed their preference for a circular staircase, a large elliptical stair hall was designed for the central feature from which the various rooms radiated.



The sun room which overlooks the terrace and lake can be completely closed and heated during the winter months, and as completely opened up for summer use as an open porch. This was accomplished by the use of Pella windows which are equipped with self-storing roll-up screens and double glazing.

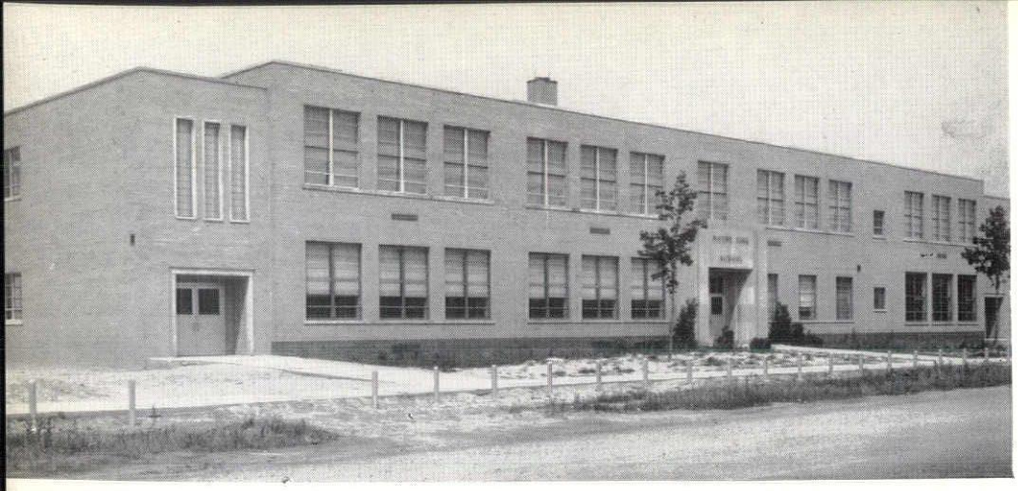
The early-American library is finished in wormy chestnut and has solid hewn beams in the ceiling, each weighing close to one-half ton.

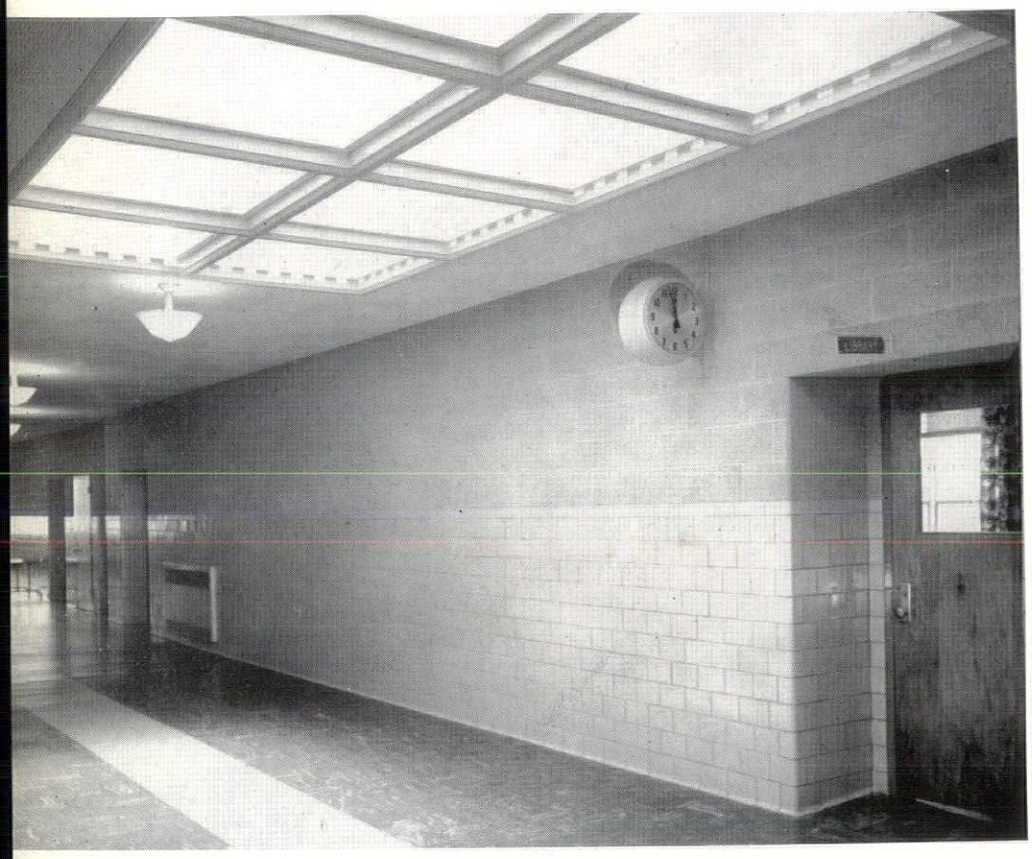
The recreation room in the basement is treated in a contemporary manner with the usual cove lighting, photo mural, snack bar, etc., and, needless to say, is the delight of the youngsters who can enter it from the garage level and whip up hamburgers for their friends without disturbing those upstairs.

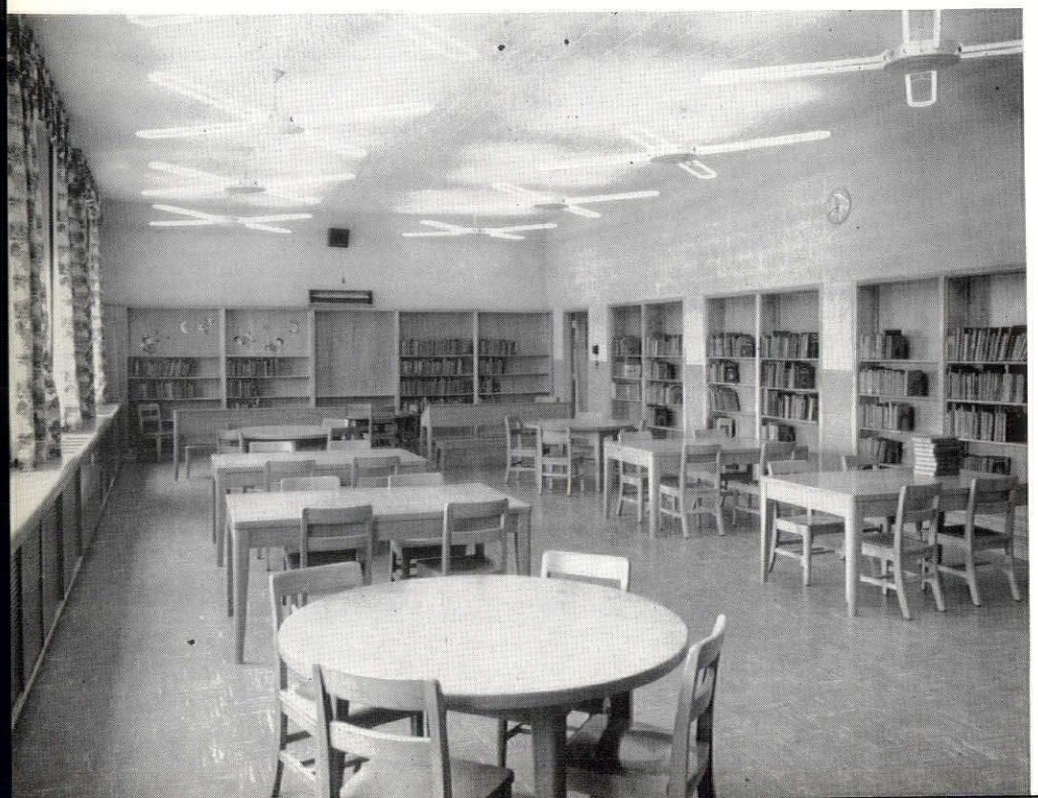
All rooms are air conditioned for ventilating, heating, and cooling.

"As the architects, we like to look upon this home as an example of traditional architecture, pleasing to the eye of the public as well as to the owners and successfully meeting today's living requirements, just as any other architectural style will do when properly handled."

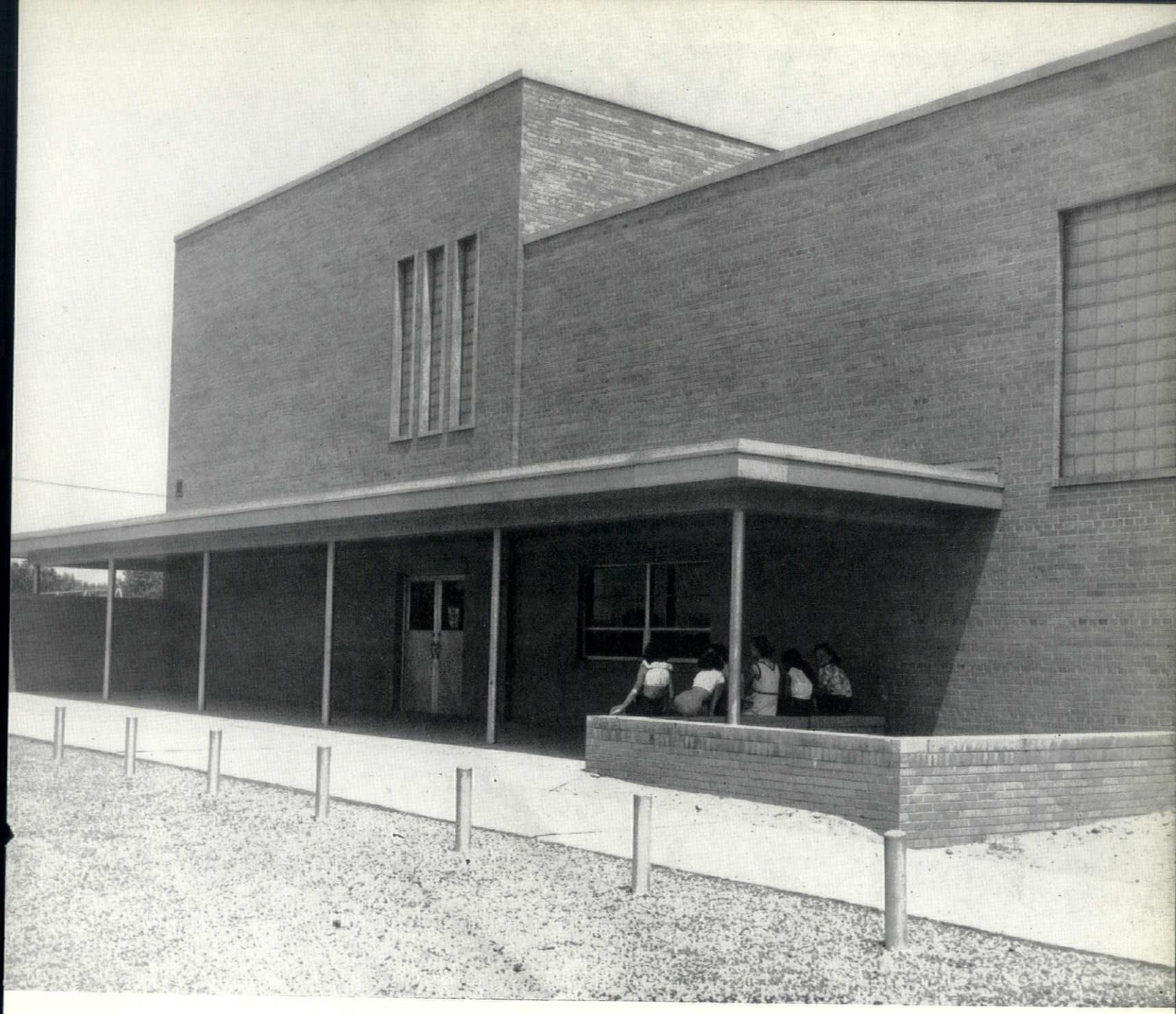
Among the firms identified with this residence were: Allied Home Equipment Co., Foster For Floors, Fred Lechy, Ray T. Lyons Co., Michigan Tile & Marble Co., Model Kitchens Inc., of Michigan, Fred W. Moote, Plastic Products Co., Harold Rouse & Sons, St. Charles Custom Steel Kitchens, Turner-Brooks, Inc.







Mound Park Elementary School
Van Dyke, Michigan
Architects: Jensen & Keough
Architects & Engineers
Detroit, Michigan



photographs by william e. bradley

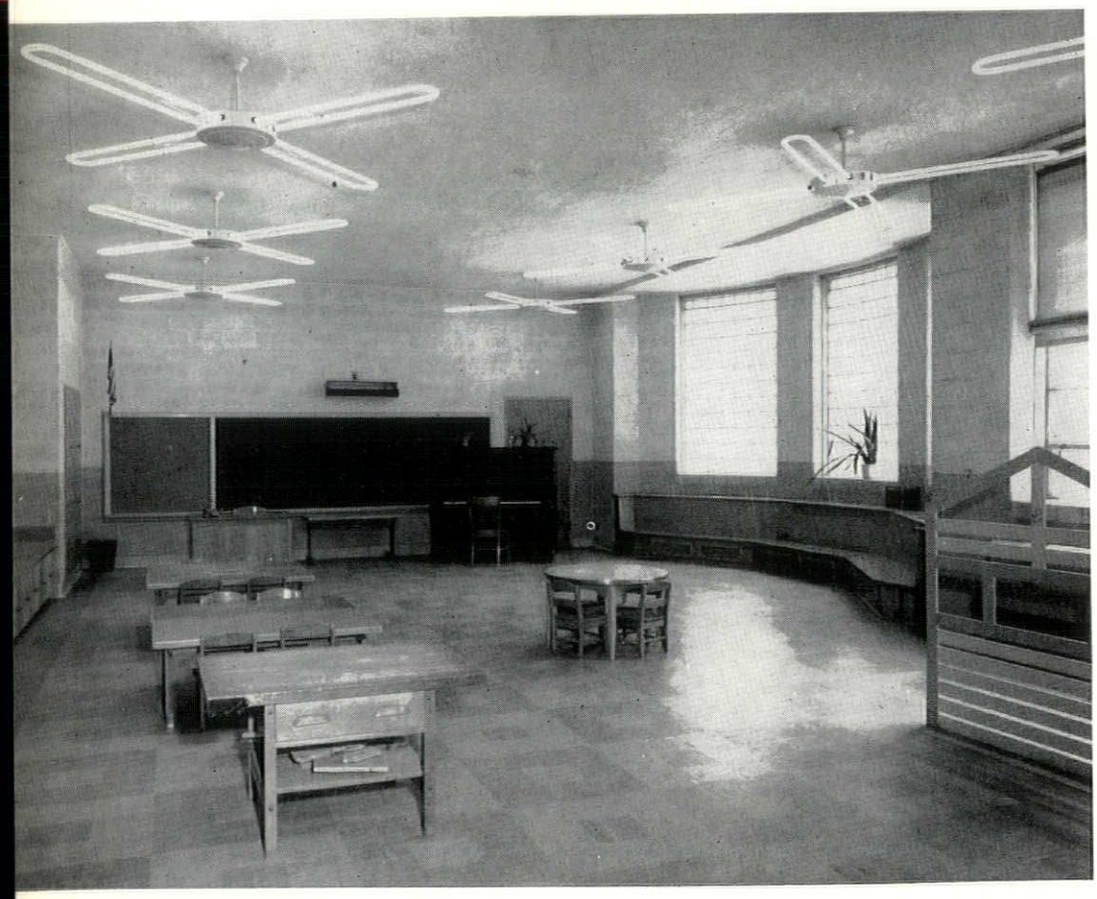
The Mound Park Elementary School is located on the south side of Toepfer Ave., between Cyman on the east and Currie Ave. on the west, in Warren Township, School Dist. No. 7, Van Dyke, Mich.

It is a two story building containing 26 class rooms including library and music rooms. A separate wing contains a multipurpose room with stage and In-Wall tables for use as a cafeteria. An adequate kitchen serves this room.

Boys and girls shower and locker rooms are provided which may be used from the play ground as well as from the multipurpose room.

The heating is a forced hot water system. Pumps for the system are the Bell & Gosset type. The controls are pneumatic. Supply mains and returns are run through a tunnel from the existing boiler to the new west wing. Mains for the new second floor addition were installed, when the original building was constructed. Runouts and risers were brought through for the second floor addition.

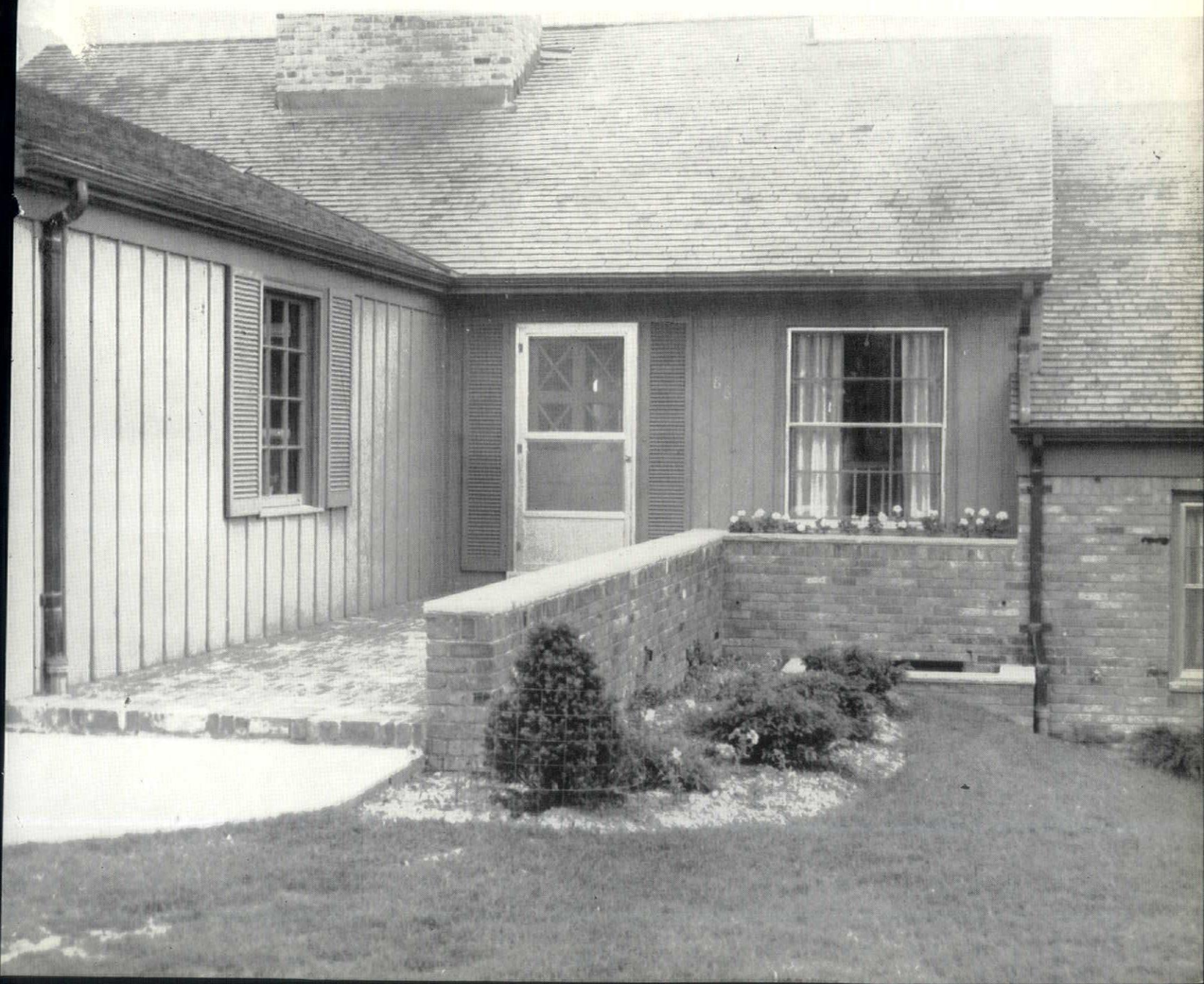
The radiation in the classrooms are the convector type with Herman-Nelson unit ventilators. Each room is thermostatically controlled. The cafeteria and shower rooms are heated by radiant panels installed in the floors, supplemented by Herman-Nelson unit heaters and convectors. A complete system of motorized ventilating supplies the building with complete changes.

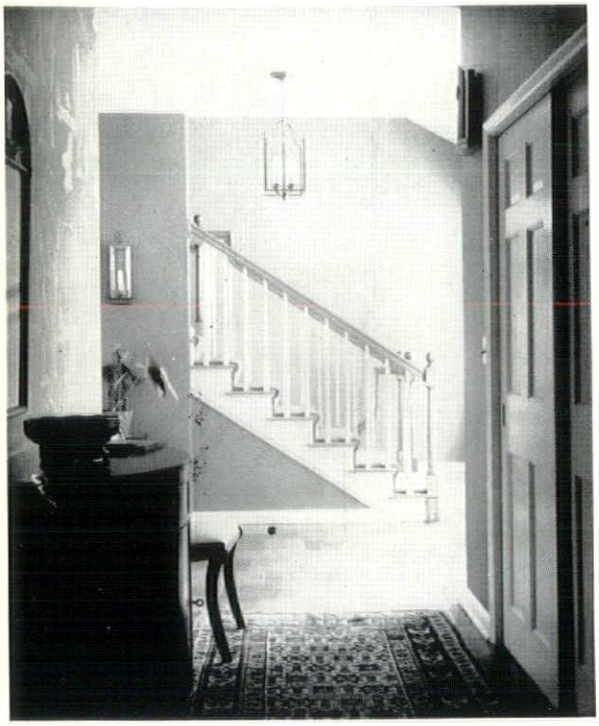


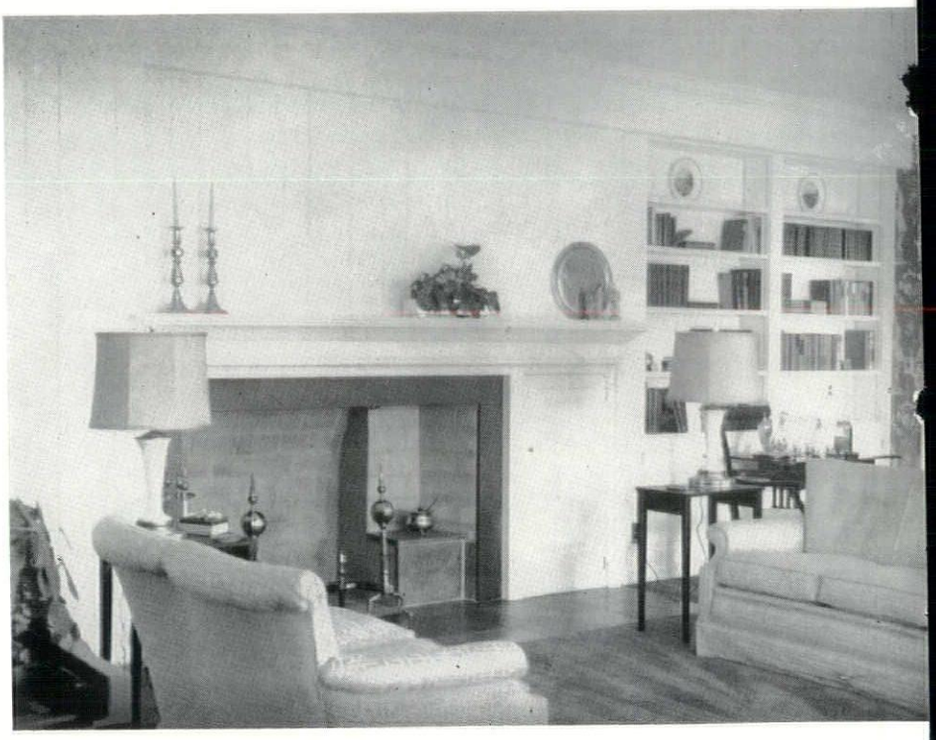
Among the firms identified with this school were: Belden-Stark Brick Co., William Bortolotti & Sons, Boston Tile & Terrazzo Co., Cooper Electric Co., Gypsum Constructors, Inc., R. E. Leggette Co., John A. Mercier Brick Co., J. L. Peters Co., Schroeder Paint & Glass Co., Turner-Brooks, Inc.

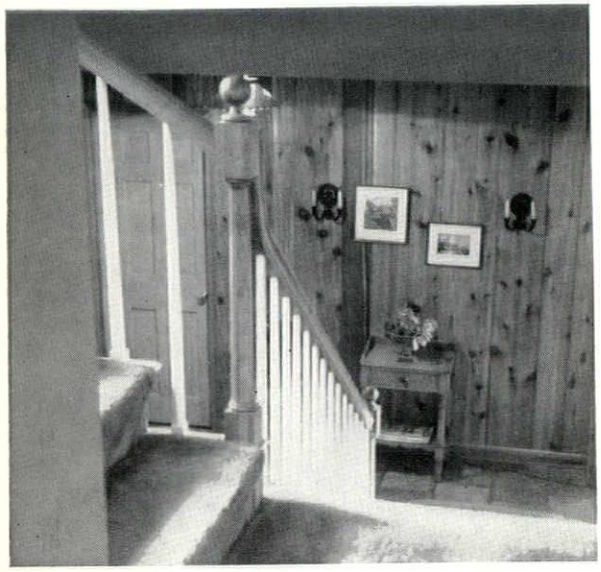
Residence of Mr. and Mrs. James E. Bullock
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Architect: John Lockyer Pottle, A.I.A.
Grosse Pointe, Michigan

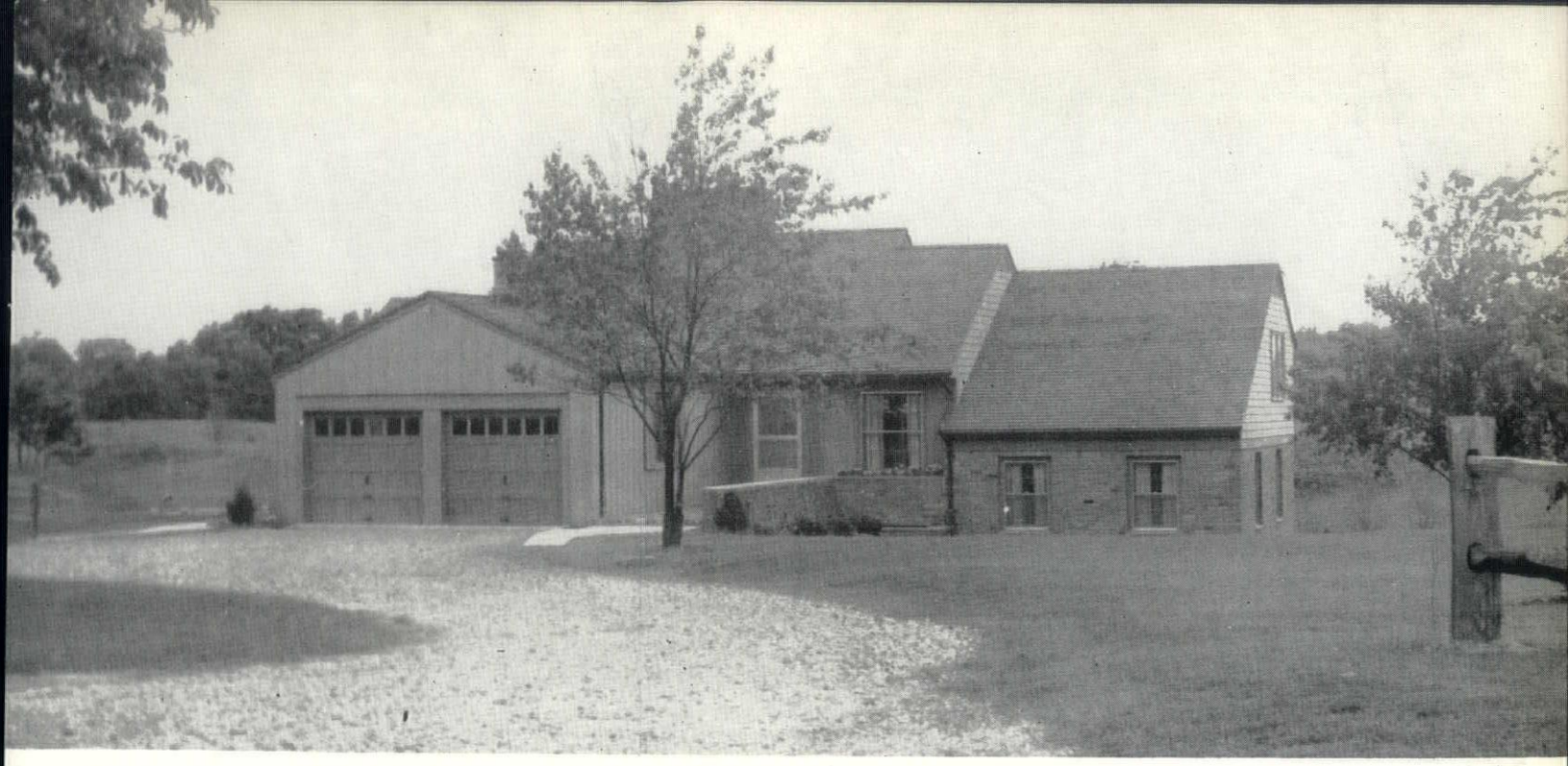
by robert e. edge











photographs by robert e. edge

Site

A wooded lot sloping gently from the road back to the building site, then dropping steeply into a ravine.

Problem

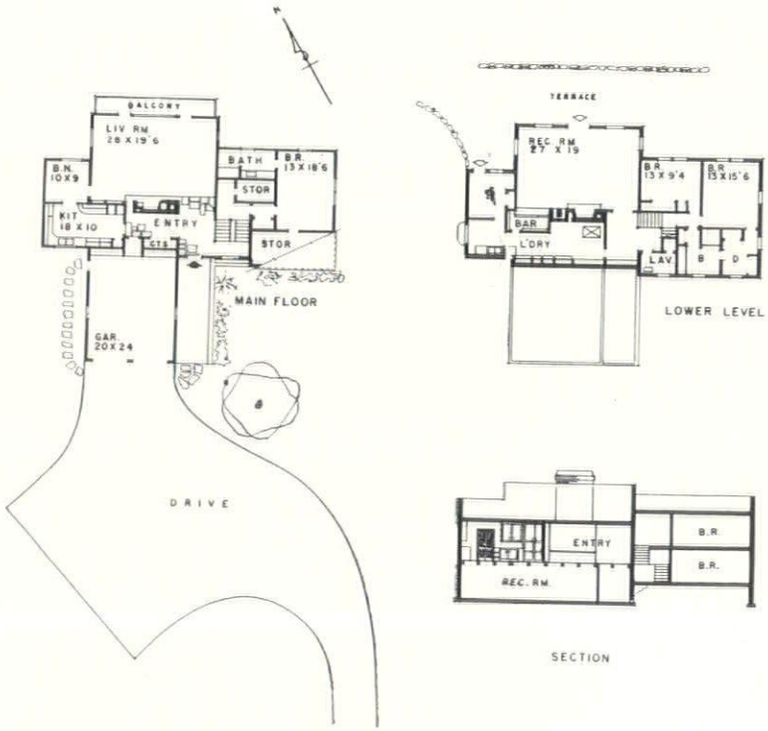
To design a home taking full advantage of the hillside site with a contemporary floor plan but with traditional New England appointments both inside and out. The owners desired a large, formal living room, small dining space, and an ample, modern kitchen. The bedroom requirements consisted of bedroom, dressing room, and bath for Mrs. Bullock, and bedroom using same bath for Mr. Bullock, a guest room and bath isolated from the owner's rooms for privacy.

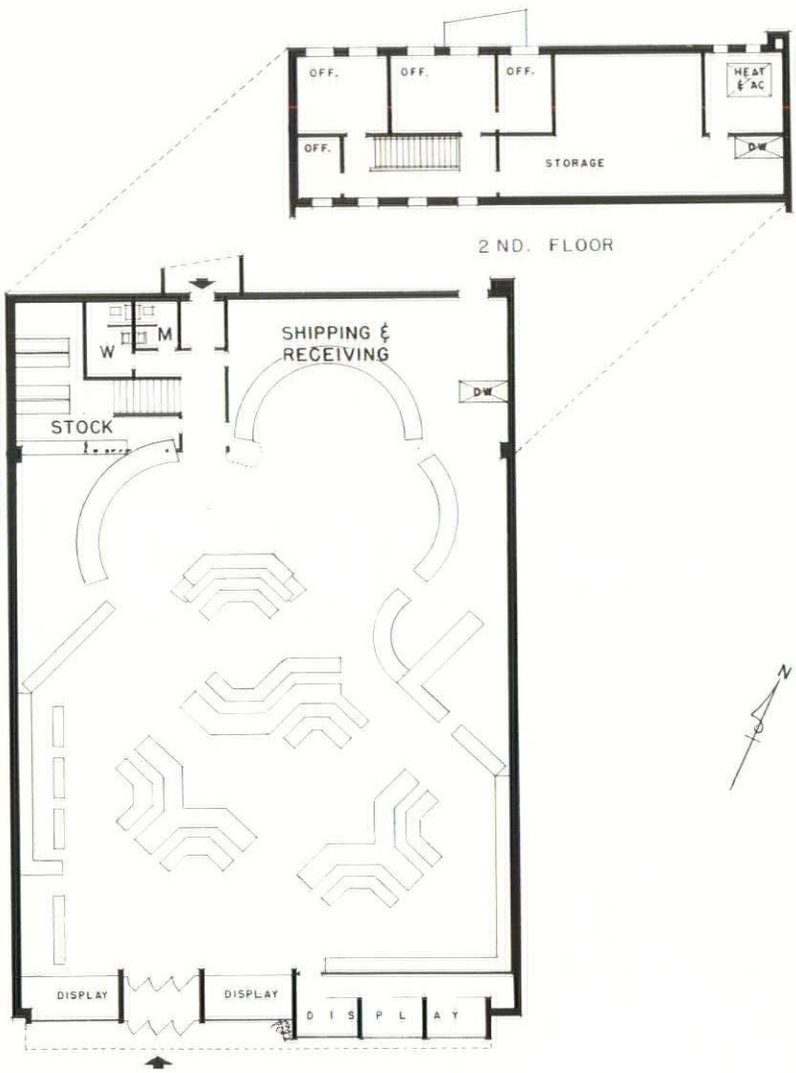
Solution

The four-level home fulfilled all the owners' desires, giving them the living section of the house on the entrance grade level, a stair hall divided the bedroom section, up ½ level to the guest room, down ½ level to the owners' bedrooms, down a full level to the recreation room opening onto a terrace at the rear of the house overlooking a ravine.

The split level heating problem was simplified by the use of ceiling panel radiant heat which proved to be both efficient and economical to operate.

Among the firms identified with this residence were: William F. Back Lumber Company, Boice Builder's Supply, J. D. Candler Roofing Co., Incorporated, Dee Construction Company.





Site

An inside lot in the shopping center of Grosse Pointe. The existing architecture is mixed traditional and contemporary plus some pre-war modern.

Problem

To design an attractive contemporary building to be leased by a women's apparel shop. Street display was a primary factor, plus the fact that the lessee did not wish to have a completely open front type of building.

Solution

The front elevation was derived from the tenant's desire to have attractive windows that could be individually decorated. The color of the New York ledgestone contrasted with the white painted brick and maul macotta black marque and white base, form a functional background and focal point for the display areas.

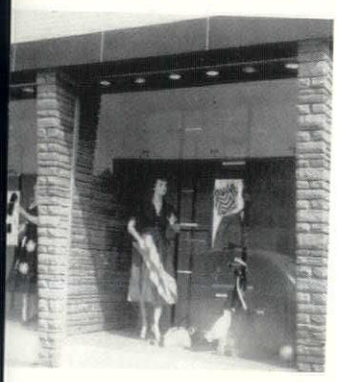
The interior of the store is visible to the public through the full vision entrance doors and show window to the left. The interior design, counters and lighting was handled by the Display Department under the able management of Mrs. Greene.

Due to the shallow sewer, the building could not have a basement and the mechanical core had to be placed on the balcony and roof as it was desirable to use the entire ground floor for merchandising. The remainder of the balcony was used for offices, alteration department, toilets, etc.

Easy traffic flow is achieved through a rear entrance to customers' parking area.

Himelhoch's Store
Grosse Pointe, Michigan
Architect: John Lockyer Pottle, A.I.A.
Grosse Pointe, Michigan

Among the firms identified with this store were: American Automatic Heating Co., Arrow Steel Co., Boston Tile & Terrazzo Co., David Drazin & Son, Detroit Acoustical Contracting Co., The Dunn-Rainey Co., Durako Paint & Color Corp., Gratiot Plumbing & Heating Co., Hanley Co.



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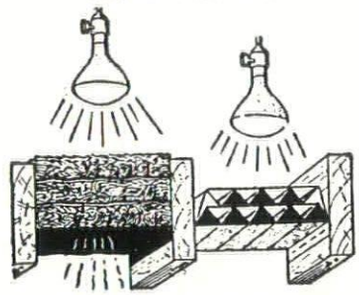

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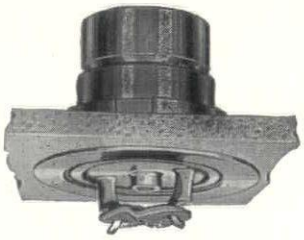

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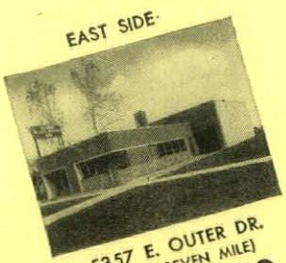

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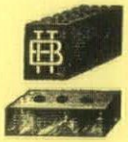

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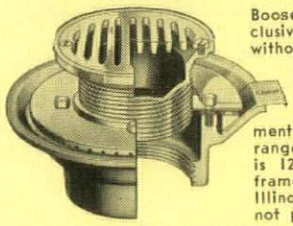

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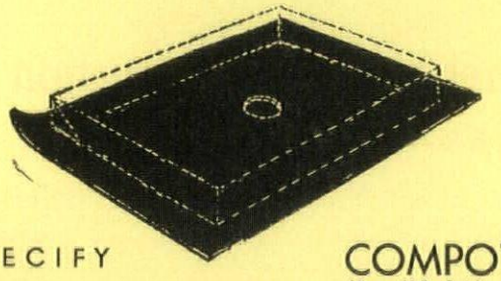

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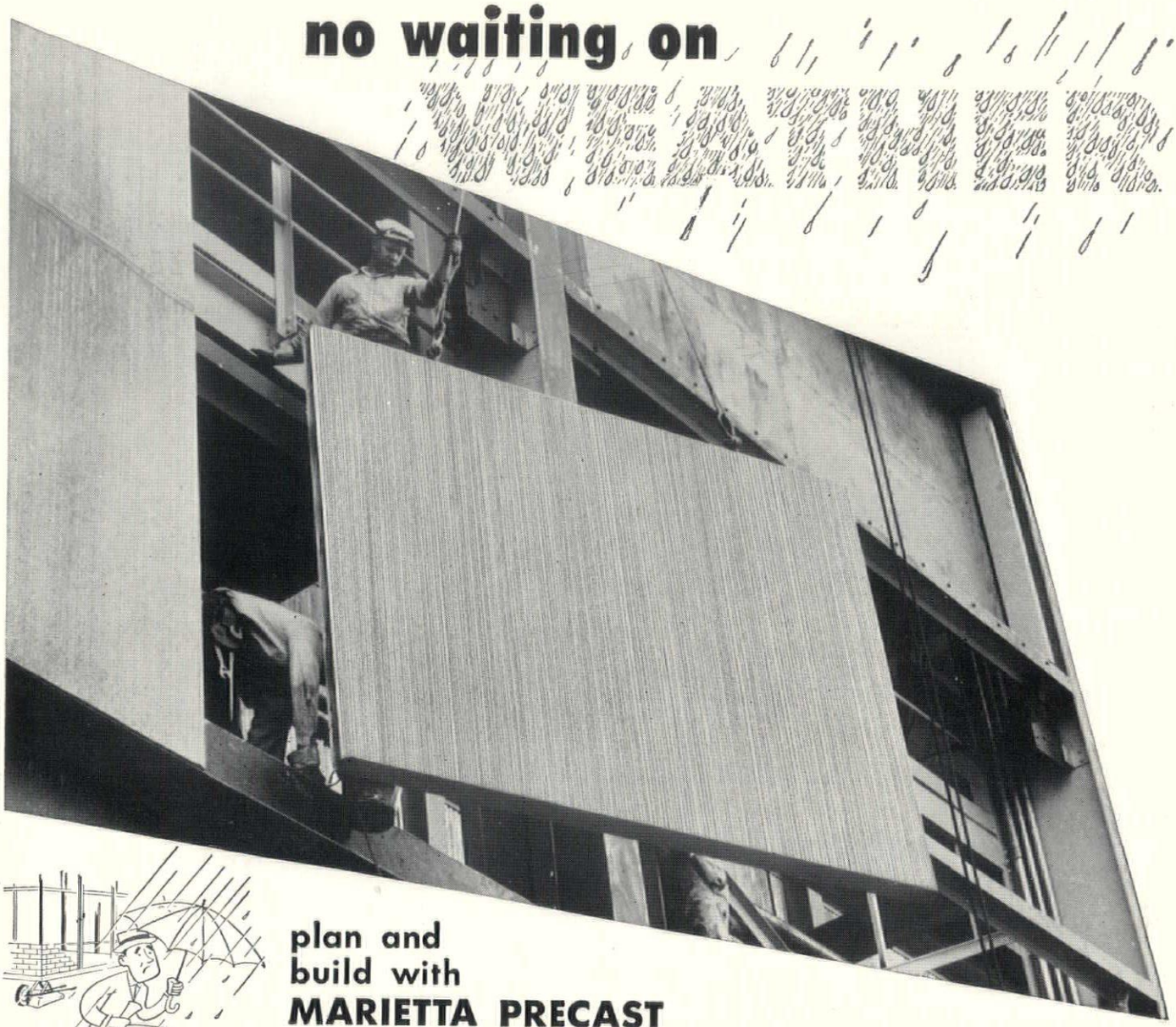

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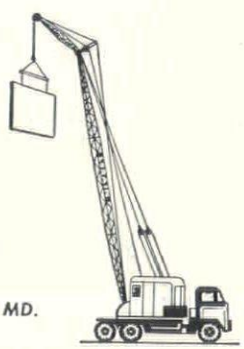

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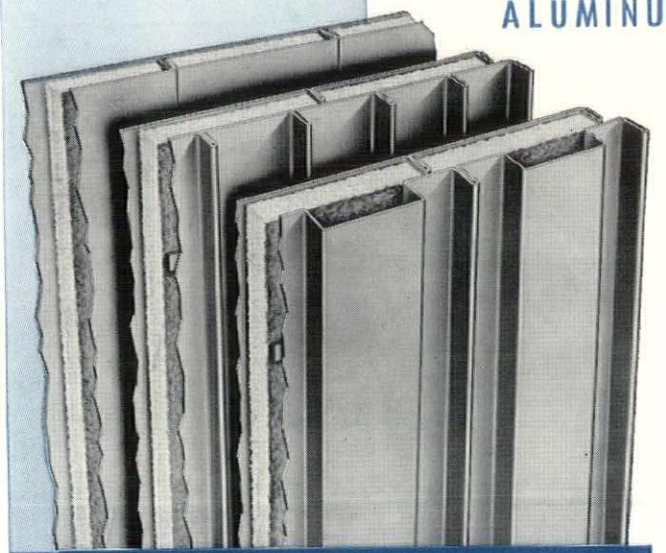

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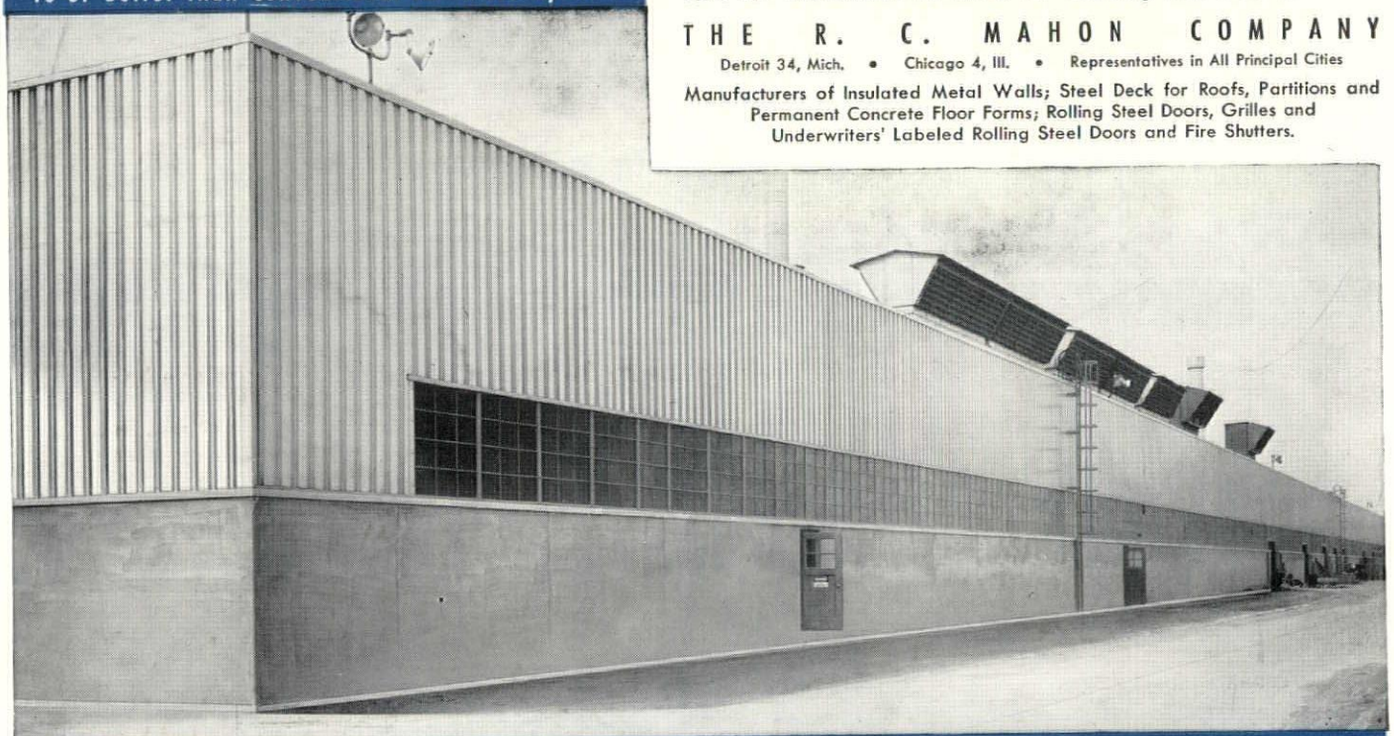

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